THE
NEW YORK LEDGER
DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XIII. R. BONNER, { EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 44 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, JUNE 13, 1857. TERMS, { $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 14.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

CHAPTER IV.

ESTELLE.

'Alas! the breast that inly bloods
Hath naught to fear from outward blow:
Who falls from all she knows of bliss
Cares little into what abyss." BYRON

Meanwhile how passed the time with her who, stricken at her meridian culmination of honor and happiness, had fallen so suddenly and so low?

We left her seated in the carriage with Messrs. Oldfield and Trevor, on the road to Bloomingdale parsonage. Closely enveloped in the bridal veil, which she had had as yet no opportunity of changing, she sat back in a corner of the carriage.

She was too absorbed in her despair to notice the beautiful country through which their road passed, winding among wooded hills, down through flowery dales, or between high hedges, thickly matted and overgrown with the fragrant wild rose, the maythorn, and the sweet honeysuckle, and shutting in some richly-cultivated field or garden;—or to listen to the music of the thousand choristers of nature, now singing in concert their vesper hymn.

The sun went down amid a gorgeous blazonry of crimson, purple and gold; darkness crept over the heavens and the earth, and the stars came out, first one by one, and then in scores, and then in hundreds, until myriads of angel eyes seemed to look down from the firmament; and presently the full moon arose and flooded all this beautiful scene with silvery splendor; and still Estelle, buried in the depths of her despair, remained unconscious of time, or of the change of lights.

Neither of her companions addressed her, thinking it was better that, after so much excitement, she should be left to her own reflections, if haply she might gain repose. Neither did they, in their respect for her grief, speak the one to the other; the ride passed in almost total silence.

It was late, and the moon rode high in the heavens, when the carriage turned into the narrow, shaded and decliving road leading down to Bloomingdale.

The place, as its name indicated, was a small, deep, verdant dell, settled down among crowded hills, in the midst of which nestled near together the little antique gothic church and the cottage parsonage; the cottage garden being divided from the church-yard only by a hedge, and the whole surrounded by a stone wall; and all—church, cottage, wall and hedge, so completely overgrown with moss, ivy, and creeping vines, and so densely crowded with shrubs and trees, as to be indistinguishable except by the spire rising from the clump of elms, and indicating the character of the obscured outlines.

"We are at home, dearest child," said Mr. Oldfield, as the carriage stopped.

The footman sprang off from behind, opened the door and let down the steps.

Mr. Trevor alighted, followed by Mr. Oldfield, who handed out his protege. They were before a low garden gate, surrounded by an arch all overgrown with honeysuckles, whose pendant tendrils kissed their heads in passing through. They entered by this a semi-circular walk, under a lattice work, covered with grape vines, and leading around to the front portico of the cottage, which was covered closely, as was the whole house, with a matted growth of running roses, clematis, jessamine, flowering ivy, and every description of beautiful and fragrant climbing vine.

Within this green and blooming bower a light, in a shaded alabaster lamp, shone purely as a moon over the darkly-polished oaken door.

The Rector drew the arm of his charge protectingly within his own, and led her into this portico, and rapped.

His summons was answered by a neatly-dressed, red-checked, bright-eyed servant maid, who opened the door, and smiled and curtseyed on seeing her master; but immediately started and stared with open-mouthed wonder at the white-veiled form shrinking near him.

"Come, come, Sarah, my good girl, let us in! What are you thinking of? Your mistress is——"

"Yes, sir, in the parlor!" exclaimed Sarah, recovering her self-command, and springing aside.

"Show us in there."

"Yes, sir," said Sarah, opening a door on the left side of the hall, and revealing one of the coziest of English home scenes.

It was a medium-sized parlor of faultless neatness and cleanliness, comfortably carpeted and curtained; warmed by a glowing fire of sea coal, in a polished steel grate, that the chilly spring evening rendered acceptable; each side this fire-place were deep recesses, from ceiling to floor, filled on the left by a tall book-case of favorite volumes, and on the right by a high cabinet of shells, minerals, ores, coins, medallions, storied old china, and other objects of virtu. Soft, deep sofas, easy chairs, and foot-cushions, of various styles, to suit every need, and tables and stands for every reasonable parlor purpose, were conveniently arranged around.

But perhaps the most attractive article of furniture was the neat tea table that stood in the midst of the room, before the glowing grate, covered with a milk-white, ample damask table-cloth that reached the floor, and laden with its glistening service of silver-plate and white china.

In an arm chair a little to the left of the table, sat a stately old lady of perhaps sixty-five years of age, looking not unlike the dignified housekeeper of Hyde Hall. She was arrayed in a stiff black silk gown, with a surplice bosom, open to reveal a glimpse of the snow white muslin handkerchief crossed over the bosom within; a white muslin cap, with a very high and stiffly starched crown, surmounted her silvery grey hair and severe physiognomy, and added height if not dignity to her appearance. On the other side, between her chair and the corner of the fire-place, was a stand on which stood a lamp and a volume of what might have been religious tracts, just closed and laid aside, with her spectacles between the leaves to keep the place.

ESTELLE'S RECEPTION BY MRS. OLDFIELD.

Had Estelle been in a condition to notice anything, she might have been repelled by the severe aspect of this lady, who the reader has already guessed to be Mrs. Oldfield, the Rector's wife.

Mrs. Oldfield belonged to the old school of English women of the middle classes. A rigid pietist, a severe disciplinarian, a model wife, mother and house-keeper; she had reared, in high respectability, a large family, had seen her sons established in professions, had married off her daughters to eligible and responsible men—in a word, had completed her life's work without a flaw or blemish, and now at the age of sixty-five had sat down in perfect self-satisfaction and very little charity for those who had been less faultless, or less fortunate.

As she saw the party enter, she arose, somewhat stiffly, between formality, age and rheumatism, and stood ready to receive her guests; but soon stared almost as wildly as had Sarah Copley on perceiving the veiled bridal figure that hung upon her husband's arm; her first idea was, that their old bachelor friend, Mr. Trevor, had resolved upon taking to himself a wife, and brought the lady there to be married; she frowned formidably in advance at this supposititious irregularity.

Mr. Oldfield sighed deeply as he noticed the rigor of her first regards of one to whom he had dared to promise on her part a mother's tender care; he silently prayed that when she should know all, the weight of her righteous indignation might fall only on the guilty, not on the innocent unfortunate. But her austure aspect, while as yet she knew nothing to the disadvantage of the guest, (but that she seemed to be placed in an embarrassing position,) filled him with forebodings as to her future treatment of his charge; while he thanked heaven for the mental abstraction from outward objects that so shielded the already wounded heart of poor Estelle from the arrows of unkindness in her eyes.

All these thoughts on either side passed in much less time than it has taken to tell.

"This is Lady Montressor, Mrs. Oldfield," said the Rector, presenting his protege.

"Lady—Mon—tressor?" slowly repeated the hostess, gazing searchingly into the pale, worn, most despairing, yet perfectly beautiful face, that with its downcast eyes, was now unveiled and bowed before her.

She knew that Mr. Oldfield had gone to Hyde that morning to assist at the marriage of Lord Montressor and Miss Morelle, whom by the way she had not seen for years, and could not now recognize in the sorrow-stunned woman before her; but why should Lady Montressor, who was married this morning, be here alone in bridal array, to-night?"

"Oh! I beg your ladyship's pardon," she said at length, recovering her presence of mind, though by no means her astonishment, and offering her own comfortable chair to her visitor—"Pray be seated, Lady Montressor."

Estelle mechanically sank into the proffered seat.

Mr. Trevor greeted his hostess, who welcomed him kindly, and invited him to sit down.

The Rector threw himself into his own favorite leathern chair, rubbed his hands with an assumption of cheerful ease, and said—

"Now tea! tea! my dear! as quickly as it can be served. This lady greatly needs refreshment, for I think she has not broken her fast since morning."

"But, perhaps Lady Montressor would prefer first to retire to her room and change her dress," suggested the old lady, turning towards her guest and gazing with no abatement of astonihments upon her strange attire, wondering whether she had brought any baggage, and in fact wondering all around the compass of which she formed the centre.

But Estelle did not reply to her suggestion, most likely did not understand, or even hear it.

And Mr. Oldfield hastened to answer.

"No, my dear, I think not; her ladyship's trunks have not yet arrived, and I think she will not feel disposed to change until she retires for the night, which should be soon, as she is really ill from fatigue. Therefore, tea! tea! my good wife, as soon as possible."

Then rising, and crossing over to Estelle, he said,

"You would like to retire soon my child, would you not?"

"Oh! yes—yes," she murmured in a voice nearly extinct with grief and weariness.

"But—*where is his lordship?*" very naturally enquired the correct old gentlewoman.

"Lord Montressor—is—ahem!—not here at the present time," replied the Rector, pointedly; but seeing that this very direct answer failed to enlighten and satisfy his lady, he added, "come, come, my dear! there is no misunderstanding between Lord and Lady Montressor; they are on excellent terms. Well, of course, there is *something* to be explained, which you shall hear in time! meanwhile, my dear, tea, tea!"

It was some comfort to be told that there *was* something real and not to be left to imagine herself under the influence of a wierd dream; and so the excellent woman set somewhat more at ease upon the subject of this strange bridal apparition, rang and ordered tea, which was immediately served.

"Suffer me to relieve you, my child," said the Rector, gently, but rather awkwardly, officiating as lady's maid and unfastening and removing the veil and wreath from her brow. "There, let me draw your easy chair to the table. Do you hear me, dear child?" he inquired, uneasy at beholding her look of apathetic despair.

"Oh! yes, yes, I hear, understand, and thank you, for this and for all. I know—I remember, that but for you, I should have passed this night—that was to have been my wedding night—in prison," she murmured in a deep heart-thrilling tone.

"'*In prison!*'" Mrs. Oldfield had heard these fearful words, and involuntarily echoed them!

"Do not mind her, my dear Madam—she—I mean, don't mind her," whispered Mr. Trevor, to his hostess, whose astonishment had returned with a vengeance.

Estelle, had she been less absorbed in her profound sorrow, might have noticed the shocked and scandalized expression of the old lady's countenance; but as it was the severe regards of Mrs. Oldfield fell harmlessly upon her whom despair had rendered invulnerable.

"Come, my child, you must really force yourself to take something. Endeavor now to swallow some tea and toast, for the sake of one in whose name I speak to you," said the Rector, gently placing his charge at the table.

Silently and mechanically Estelle did all that was required of her, though the act of swallowing was almost impossible. And now the deferential care of the two clergymen for their fair charge again modified Mrs. Oldfield's ill suspicions of her guest.

Directly after tea, at the suggestion of Mr. Oldfield, the bell was rung, and the little bright-eyed maid, Sarah Copley, was summoned to show Lady Montressor to her chamber.

Mrs. Oldfield gave some directions in a low voice, aside to her abigail, who curtseyed, lighted a night lamp, and stood ready to attend her ladyship.

Silently and mechanically Estelle arose and bowing good night to the circle, followed her attendant from the parlor.

When they had disappeared Mr. Oldfield told the story of Lady Montressor's arrest at the altar, and the subsequent developments relating to her school history. But no logic or eloquence in the narrator, no palliating or explaining of the circum stances, could serve to lessen in Mrs. Oldfield's estimation the moral turpitude of her whom this rigorous judge persisted in regarding as a sinner of the deepest dye. And the anxious and distressed Rector had the utmost difficulty in obtaining a promise that the unhappy lady while she remained their guest, should be attended and served with the consideration due her rank. But this promise once given, however reluctantly, he knew would be faithfully performed.

Lady Montressor reached her chamber, which was the front room immediately over the parlor, and which she found neatly and plainly arranged, with a polished wax floor, maple furniture, and white dimity curtains, bed hangings and chair covers, and warmed by a bright little fire in the grate. The cheerful maid laid out a delicate cap and gown from her mistress' wardrobe, and stood waiting Lady Montressor's orders. Estelle gently declined her further attendance and dismissed her

And then——

For the first time since her appalling calamity, Estelle found herself alone.

She sank into an arm chair, dropped her throbbing and burning forehead upon her hands and tried to recollect herself and think coherently. For now that she was alone, the fearful events of the last twelve hours seemed the wierd and horrible conjurations of fever or nightmare. It was as difficult as it was terrible to realize her position.

The first stunning shock of the storm had passed. The thunderbolt had fallen, and the charred and blackened ruins of her happiness lay all around her. The whirlwind had crossed her path of life, sweeping away her dearest treasures. The waters of affliction had rolled over her soul, bearing off her most precious earthly hopes. Yes! the first shock of the storm had passed; but desolation was within and around her, and the clouds still lowered, dark, heavy, and threatening, over her devoted head.

She rapidly reviewed the chain of circumstances—when scarcely fourteen years of age she had been ensnared by an intriguing governess, and an unprincipled fortune-hunter, into a secret marriage, soon bitterly repented by herself, and disrupted by the man's felony, and now pronounced to have been from the beginning, illegal. After ten years of separation, and two of supposed widowhood, she had that morning contracted a second marriage with a party of the highest rank and character, which was said to be legal and binding to all intents and purposes. Arrested on leaving the church, upon a grave and degrading charge, she had been discarded by her parents, who would probably leave England forever, to conceal their humiliation under foreign skies; but was protected, though most delicately, from a distance, through reverend hands, by Lord Montressor, a man of stainless honor, who would be the last on earth to sacrifice moral principle to human affection, and who had in view of the law and the testimony, declared his determination to stand by the legality of their late marriage, had given her the protection of his name and title; and exacted of all others that they should address her only by that; finally, she was bound over to appear at the approaching assizes to answer the charge of a terrible and shameful crime!

Such was the past and present!

What lay before her in the future?

Her trial.

It is true that her counsel and her few devoted friends, flattered themselves and her with the promise of certain deliverance. But even *her* limited experience taught her that very little dependence could be placed upon the pre-judgment of partizans, who always made it a point to sustain the hopes of the accused by positive promises of acquittal, which were not always confirmed by the verdict of the jury. The law was proverbially uncertain. It was very possible she might be convicted.

And then—

A vision of the convict cells, the transport ship, the penal colonies, swam darkly before her mind's eyes, turning her soul sick with horror. It was but for a moment, and then, strange to say, she regarded this possible result as the condemned might regard the rack, the wheel, or the stake—a frightful torture certainly, but one happily soon ending in death. And merely saying—

"I should soon sink under it, and that would be well"—she dismissed the vision, and turned to look upon the other—scarcely the happier—contingency.

She might be acquitted, as was confidently promised by her friends, upon the ground of the illegality of the childish marriage into which she had been first entrapped.

Such were the uncertain prospects of the future.

What now became her duty?

For, with whomsover the adjudication of her legal position rested, that of her moral one remained, under these as under other circumstances, with herself alone.

What then was her duty?

It might be indicated by circumstances.

In the event of a conviction, her fate would be taken out of her own hands, leaving her nothing to do, but simply to submit and be patient until death should terminate her sufferings.

But on the other hand, with the issue of acquittal would come a mighty moral problem, involving a terrible soul-struggle; for then Lord Montressor would immediately claim her as his wife; nay more, he would undoubtedly have his travelling carriage in waiting to convey her directly from the scene of her sufferings to his seat in Dorset, or to some other peaceful retreat he would provide, where the arms of affection should uphold and nurse her back to life, health, and serenity. The law of the realm would sustain him in this course; the world ever ready to bow to success would be his partizan; and deeper and more potent than law, or world, the advocate in her own heart was retained in his service and would plead his cause.

Should she admit his claim, yield herself up to his higher wisdom for direction, and with a child's unquestioning trust, repose in the blessed haven of his large love?

For a moment, a vision of this sweet rest beamed in upon her dark and troubled soul like the holy light of heaven.

Should she give herself up to the happiness prepared for her?

There was a pause—a long pause, and silence in her soul. Her conscience gave no affirmative.

She only saw herself at a fork in the road of life from which two paths diverged.

The one splendid with sunshine, beautiful with verdure, brilliant with flowers, and fragrant with their breath, musical with bird songs, and more than all, blessed with the presence of her noble beloved, who stood with outstretched arms, wooing her to enter. But, was Duty there?

The other, dark with cloud and storm, barren, silent, solitary, desolate, no helping hand there held out to her, no encouraging voice inviting her, she would tread it, if tread it she must, *alone*, with tearful eyes, and bleeding feet, and staggering steps; yet not unblessed, if Duty were there.

How should she decide? The question pressed itself upon her conscience for solution. She would not try to shake it off, to say—"Time enough when the trial is over"—for she felt constrained to be prepared for the result of that trial.

It was a terrible ordeal! one not to be safely passed without much prayer.

Estelle sank upon her knees, and prayed long and earnestly for light to see her duty, and for strength to follow it. Who ever sought the source of light and strength and came away blind and feeble?

The night spent in prayer brought a morning full of peace and courage. She had decided what her course should be in the event of an acquittal.

It was eight o'clock before her bell summoned Sarah Copley, who entered as usual, smilingly, and said:

"If you please, my lady, your trunks have come from Hyde, and will you please to have them brought up here?"

"Yes, certainly, my girl, but how came they here?"

"Please, my lady, I don't know; but when my master sent back the Bishop's carriage, he sent a note to Sir Parke Morelle, I know, because I handed it to John, the footman, to deliver; and, please your ladyship, the trunks came about half an hour ago, and your ladyship's own maid came with them."

"What? Susan Copsewood?"

"Yes, your ladyship, shall I send her up? or would your ladyship accept my services?"

"Thank you, my good girl; no, send up Susan Copsewood."

"Yes, madam," said the abigail, disappearing.

In a few minutes after, Susan Copsewood entered, and immediately upon the sight of her adored and unhappy mistress, sank down at her feet, embraced her knees, and burst into tears.

Lady Montressor laid her hand upon the girl's head in silent benediction. There was no utility in words as yet, and none were spoken. When, however, Susan had wept herself into calmness, and had arisen from her feet, and stood waiting, Lady Montressor inquired—

"How are my father and mother, Susan?"

"Hm! dear lady, I always tell you the truth if

I speak at all. But now please excuse me from speaking," said the girl, sadly.

"Ah! God, is it so?—have I nearly killed or maddened my parents?" exclaimed Lady Montressor, growing deathly pale and faint, and sinking into the nearest seat.

"Oh, then, I see I must speak! No, dear madam, Sir Parke and my lady are not dead, nor are they any madder than they always were—saving your presence; but, since I must tell the truth lest worse be thought, they are both very angry."

"It was to be expected! But what put it in your head, kind girl, to come to me?"

"Why, no one put it there—it came there natural, my lady! What else could I do but come to you the first opportunity? Last night about eleven o'clock, John Brownloe, the Bishop of Exeter's footman, brought a note from Mr. Oldfield to master. I saw it handed to master's own man to be carried up. Well! soon the bell was rung for me, and I was ordered to pack up all your ladyship's wardrobe, and have it ready to dispatch at four o'clock this morning. So I went to work and did it. Just before I strapped down the last trunk, master came in. And 'Susan,' says he, 'have you strapped down all the trunks?' 'All but this, Sir,' says I. 'Lift up the lid,' says he. I did so, and he put a letter in——"

"A letter! Susan, my girl, where is it?" exclaimed Lady Montressor, eagerly.

"In the buff-colored trunk, my lady, which they are going to bring up presently."

"Go on."

"Well, as I was saying, dear lady, after I had packed everything up, and looked around to see if anything had been forgotten, lo and behold there was *myself* that might have been left behind, if I hadn't recollected, so I got ready with the rest of your ladyship's effects, to be sent off. Thus at four o'clock in the morning I delivered myself along with the trunks. 'And who are you?' says the drayman. 'I wasn't hired to take no passenger, but only baggage,' says he. 'Very well,' says I. 'I'm a part of her ladyship's baggage—lend a hand and hoist me up.' So after a little more altercation, the stupid fellow let me up, and here I am, your ladyship!"

"Thank you, Susan; you——"

She was here interrupted by a rap at the door.

It was a couple of plough boys, who had brought up her trunks. As soon as they were placed, and the boys had retired, Lady Montressor hastened to take the keys from Susan, and unlock one—the one indicated as containing the letter. There it lay upon the top of all the contents—she snatched it eagerly. Oh! might it bear one word of peace and pardon to her sorrow-stricken heart! She tore it open. It was an envelope, containing a check for a thousand pounds, drawn in her favor, upon the bank of Exeter. No more, not a line—not a word. With a deep sigh, Estelle laid it aside, and sank into her chair.

The maid, with a tact and delicacy above her condition in life, selected from among the many rich dresses of the trousseau, a morning robe of pale gray silk—the plainest there, and laid it out for her lady's use; and then, without words, prepared her toilet; so that Lady Montressor was ready to go below to meet the family at their nine o'clock breakfast.

As she descended, the hall door was open, and she looked out.

How beautiful, on this bright May morning, was the parsonage and its surroundings,—a wilderness of flowers, shrubs, and trees, with the old church spire rising from the midst. Upon any other former day, this sweet rural landscape would have filled the heart of Estelle with delight; now, however, she only saw that it was lovely, and passed on to the door on the right, leading into the parlor.

The family were already gathered there. As she opened the door, Mr. Oldfield arose and came to meet her, and with a kind—

"Good morning, my child; I hope you have rested well," led her to the table.

Mrs. Oldfield greeted her with stately courtesy.

And Mr. Trevor, with a smile and bow, placed a chair for her use.

Breakfast, that seemed only to await her arrival, was immediately served. During that meal Mrs. Oldfield never, except in strict necessity, addressed her fair guest; and when she spoke it was with the most ceremonious politeness. There was nothing to complain of, yet Lady Montressor felt depressed and chilled; but she accepted this, as all else, in the submissive spirit of expiation.

Immediately after breakfast Mr. Trevor, whose charge lay in the neighborhood of Montressor Castle, in the adjoining county of Dorset, took leave, saying, as he held the hand of Lady Montressor—

"Though I depart from your presence, I remain in your service, my child. When I can render you any assistance, command me; I am ever at your orders."

"I earnestly thank you, sir," replied Estelle.

Mr. Trevor was gone.

Mr. Oldfield went out to make parish calls.

And Lady Montressor was left alone with her hostess, who, though polite, was not congenial.

Soon, therefore, Estelle retired to her chamber. Her faithful maid had set the room in order, and was now engaged in unpacking and hanging up her dresses in the two clothes closets that flanked the fire-place. They formed a part of that rich, tasteful, and costly trosseau that had been provided for her bridal day's vanities,—trifles certainly they were at most; yet as mementoes of the past, the past, but only yesterday, yet seeming, by the yawning gulf that divided it from to-day, so far apart, so long ago!—it was painful to see them again! So Susan Copsewood instinctively felt, and she hurried them out of sight.

"Have they sent my pocket Bible among the rest, Susan?"

"Yes, my lady, here it is," and the faithful girl handed it to her mistress.

Lady Montressor received the blessed volume with reverence, and sinking into her arm-chair, opened its pages to seek for light and strength and comfort.

"Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him."

These were the words that first met her eye, and she felt them as a message to her own soul. She read no farther just then, but softly dropping the book upon her lap, she fell into deep meditation upon the word. Yes! amid all the storm and terror of her position, the question presented to her soul was the old, old question of simply doing right or doing wrong. And her Judge, above all judges was—God! Might he strengthen her to do her awful duty!

While Lady Montressor meditated, read, and prayed in her chamber, the news that she had sought sanctuary with the Rector of Bloomingdale spread swiftly through the neighborhood. And many were the friends and acquaintance of the Rector's family, who *happened* to drop in during the course of that day. Some few among them were personally known to Estelle, and these ventured to inquire for her; but Mrs. Oldfield, after sending a message to her guest and receiving an answer, replied stiffly that Lady Montressor preferred to keep her chamber, and declined visitors. And so day after day passed, during which Estelle secluded herself, or only appeared when summoned to join the family at meal times.

Lord Montressor, busy in her cause, forbore to visit or even to correspond with his hapless bride.

Lord Dazzleright devoted the whole of his valuable time and great legal ability to her case, and spoke confidently of a fortunate issue.

Once during the week he called upon his client, and was the first and only visitor that Lady Montressor, during her self-sequestration, received. He came to gather from her, minute and detailed particulars of her school life, and *quasi* marriage, and having possessed himself of all, and taken notes, he said—

"There can be no doubt as to the result of this trial. It will be not only an acquittal, but a full and complete vindication. Therefore, permit me to say, Lady Montressor, that you do wrong to withdraw yourself from your husband's protection. Your course argues, on your part, a doubt of your true position, which may injure your case, when it comes before the Assizes."

"My lord—there is a higher tribunal, at which, some day, I shall have to appear, and I must act in view of that," replied the lady, in a deep, liquid, melodious voice, that seemed to flow and ripple over the fragments of a broken heart.

Lord Dazzleright looked suddenly into her face, and through its dark and lovely features, recognized the spirit that could "suffer and be strong"—the spirit patient and firm as sad! He sighed, and pressed her hand as he took his leave.

The next day Estelle learned, through Susan Copsewood, who had obtained the news from authentic sources, that her parents had gone to Southhampton, whence they would sail in a few days for Italy.

"Another blow!—I accept it! Oh, God—I accept it! Only make me patient to suffer, and strong to act!" was the prayer that went up from her crushed heart, upon hearing of this desertion.

She opened her Bible, to seek for comfort. Did an angel guide her hand or did the Lord of Heaven and Earth—the Father of All, before whom not a sparrow falleth unmarked—thus speak directly to his stricken child? For oh! words of life and light! these were they that met her mournful eyes: "Fear *thou* not; for *I* am with thee: be not dismayed; for *I* am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

She dropped the book and closed her eyes, for a flood of blessing had descended upon her, enveloping and impenetrating her whole being, and filling her with Divine love, wisdom and strength.

She needed all! love to teach her patience and forgiveness under unjust contumely, wisdom to guide her in her dark and dangerous path, strength to enable her to bear the approaching terrible ordeal.

In a few days intelligence was received that the Judges were within a few day's journey of Exeter, and that the Assizes would be opened on the following Monday.

Good Mr. Oldfield heard this news with much more agitation than was felt by his charge, who, pale and still, awaited her fate.

The Rector wrote a note and sent it by a special messenger to Lord Dazzleright, desiring his lordship to come at his earliest possible convenience and advise with him.

Lord Dazzleright lost no time in complying with the request, and arrived the next day at the parsonage.

Mr. Oldfield immediately conducted his lordship into his library, which was the room on the right side of the entrance hall, opposite to his old wife's parlor.

When they had reached this apartment, the Rector handed a chair to his guest, and dropped himself into another, saying—

"The Assizes are at hand."

"I know it—thank heaven, the suspense will be over," replied Lord Dazzleright, cheerfully.

"But—I took the liberty of sending for your lordship to ask—what am *I*, as Lady Montressor's surety, expected to do? Am I to wait here with her until a tipstaff summons us to appear, or must I take her to Exeter, and render her up? You see, though I am seventy years of age, I was never in a criminal court in any capacity in my life, and know no more of its forms than a child."

"I see—of course, you are expected, without farther notice to bring your charge into court. But, anticipating this natural embarrassment on your part, I have brought and left my carriage at the Inn, and will call with it to-morrow to take yourself and Lady Montressor to Exeter—if you will accept."

"Oh! with promptitude, and many thanks my lord."

"In this case, then, all that you will have to do will be to take seats in the carriage and leave the rest to myself, as her ladyship's counsel."

"I am very grateful to have my mind thus far relieved, my lord."

"I shall be at your door to-morrow morning, at ten—if that hour will suit you."

"Perfectly, my lord."

"And now, as I have a world of business on my hands, I must bid you good day," said Lord Dazzleright.

"Good day, and many thanks my lord."

The next morning, at the appointed hour, Lord Dazzleright's carriage stood before the vine-shaded garden gate of the parsonage.

It was a dark, gloomy, foreboding day, and sensibly affected the spirits of all concerned.

Estelle prayed long and earnestly in her chamber, remaining on her knees, until a gentle rap at the door and the voice of her faithful attendant, warned her that her friends were waiting. Then she arose and over her simple grey silk dress, wrapped a fine grey woollen shawl, put on a close cottage bonnet of grey crape, threw over it a black lace veil, took her gloves and her Bible, and followed her maid down stairs.

Mr. Oldfield waited in the hall, and Lord Dazzleright in the carriage, to receive her.

Lord Dazzleright's kindness of heart suggested all things needful.

"Where is her ladyship's woman?" he inquired, after greeting Lady Montressor, and observing that she was unattended. "Is she not going with her mistress."

"Why nothing has been said of it, my lord—we did not know that it would be convenient to your lordship to——"

"Is that she?—hasten, my good girl, throw on your bonnet, and get in here, beside me—did you not know your lady would require your services?" said Lord Dazzleright, interrupting the Rector, to hurry the maid.

"Yes, my lord, I knew it well enough, only——" the rest of her sentence was lost in distance as she hurried around the circular walk towards the house. She re-appeared in five minutes, and took her place in the carriage.

And Lady Montressor and the Rector occupying the back seat, and Lord Dazzleright and the maid the front one, they drove rapidly off towards the Exeter turnpike.

A long, dreary ride, under a dark and weeping sky, and over a landscape humid with its fallen tears, brought them, at the close of day, into the city of Exeter, the capital of Devonshire, and the ancient seat of the West Saxon kings. They drew up, and turned into the court-yard of a quiet hotel in the neighborhood of the Assizes. There was no registry of names required there, as in our own "free" country, and therefore no gaping and staring crowd could identify the pale, beautiful woman, who came attended by a clergyman and an attorney, as the high born lady, whose approaching trial for a grave offence, occupied all thoughts, and attracted crowds to the city; and no officious reporters could publish the fact that—"Lady Montressor occupied apartments at the 'Crown and Sceptre.'" The next day was the Sabbath, during which Estelle, escorted by Mr. Oldfield, twice attended divine service in public, without attracting attention. She passed the evening in her chamber, in prayer and self-communion, to be ready to meet the morrow and the opening of the Assizes.

CHAPTER V.

THE ASSIZES.

> "And still and pale and silently
>   The hapless lady waits her doom;
> How changed since last her speaking eye
>   Glanced gladness round the glittering room,
> When high-born men were proud to wait,
> Where beauty watched to imitate
>   Her gentle voice, her lovely mien,
> And gather from her air and gait
>   The graces of its queen." BYRON.

The next day, Monday, May 15th, the Assizes were opened with the usual attendant ceremony and bustle. And a remarkably interesting docket had attracted crowds to the spot.

The case of Lady Montressor was almost the last on the list, and divided public curiosity with that of Dlifp Oorak, the Gipsy chief.

At nine o'clock, closely veiled, and attended by the Rev Mr. Oldfield and her counsel, Lady Montressor left her lodgings, entered the carriage and was driven to the Court-house. Upon the proclamation of the public crier, that the courts were now open, etc., etc., etc—she was handed from the carriage, and still closely veiled, and leaning upon the arm of her venerable friend, entered Exeter Hall, and proceeded to the court-room.

Estelle had never been inside a court before. At first she had traversed the passage and staircase, blindly, behind her veil, but when she found herself in a crowded room, impeded, and finally nearly smothered by the pressure of the masses, she drew her veil aside for air, and saw herself within a vast hall, with an arched roof, marble pillars, and Gothic windows, not unlike a lecture-room or church.

Upon an elevated platform, technically called the "Bench," placed at the upper end of the room, and enclosed by a spacious iron-railing, sat the Judge, Sir James Allan Parke, one of the most eminent of the judges on the Western circuit of England; he was a fine, hale-looking old gentleman, arrayed in his official robes—a scarlet gown, ermine cape, and full-bottomed wig. On the wall near his seat was blazoned forth in large illuminated letters the king's commission. A little below him sat the clerk of the court. And around—sitting, standing, walking about, or conversing,—were the officers of the crown, in their official liveries, the counsellors-at-law in the long black robes and white wigs, and various nondescript individuals who seemed to hold a sort of middle place between official and non-official life.

On the right hand, below the bench, was the prisoner's dock, an enclosure not unlike a pen, in which were gathered some twenty persons of both sexes, and all ages, from twelve to seventy. Lady Montressor's eyes were spell-bound to that miserable place. Such a set of wretched-looking human creatures!—men, aye, and women and children, too!—with faces stupefied with suffering, palsied by despair, or demonized by guilt!

"Heaven and earth!—is my place among these?" she exclaimed, sick with loathing and terror. But in a moment she rallied and rebuked herself. "Down, proud heart," she said, "who hath made me to differ, and how much at last *do* I differ from these my poor brothers and sisters? *I* fell before the first temptation, though all my life was fenced about from want, or care, or sin—while they—their lives may have been one series of privations, trials, and irresistible temptations! Who shall judge but God Omniscient? God comfort them, and forgive me!" she prayed meekly, folding her hands and bowing her head.

Her venerable protector, as inexperienced in these scenes as herself, also contemplated that den of savage or brutal faces, and grew pale with dread for his delicate charge. He did not venture to turn his eyes towards Estelle, but instinctively drew her arm closer within his own, and looked around in distress for Lord Dazzleright. His lordship had left them, and might now be seen conversing with the Judge. Presently he bowed, left his position, and with a grave, sad, almost angry countenance, slowly made his way through the crowd, and approached his client.

"Well, well, Lord Dazzleright, well?" eagerly inquired Mr. Oldfield, alarmed at the ill-omened expression of the counsel's face.

"Oh! it is nothing! it is nothing!" said his lordship, drawing his handkerchief from his pocket and wiping his heated and perspiring brow.

"It is not precisely *nothing*, Lord Dazzleright, judging from your countenance and manner," said Estelle, calmly and firmly.

"Well, my child, it is nothing to alarm *you*, although it is something to displease me."

"Tell me the truth, Lord Dazzleright."

"I will do so, Lady Montressor! I went up there to examine the docket. I find our case is the last but two on the list, and may not probably come up for a week or ten days; I did not see the necessity of your ladyship's presence here in the interim. I had an opportunity of speaking to the Judge, and showed him this, and prayed that my client might be discharged from the obligation of attending court, and suffered to remain with her bail, here in the city, until the day upon which her trial should come up, when she should again punctually present herself. The Judge chose to refuse my reasonable request, and require my client's daily attendance here. And I am angry; that is all."

"Except that you are also *anxious*, my lord! Is it not so? Hide nothing from me."

"No, no, certainly not *anxious*," said the counsel, while his looks belied his words,—"in no degree *anxious*, for though this may appear unfavorable on the part of the court, yet Sir James Allan Parke, if a stern, is a just Judge, and I rest our cause upon its integral justice, not upon external favor."

"Umme! Oh—hh!" groaned the good Rector—"so she is to remain here, poor lamb! day after day a spectator of all the revolting horrors of a criminal court—and," sinking his voice to a whisper, "where is she to stand?—for the love of Heaven, not there! in the dock among those loathsome wretches?"

Lord Dazzleright looked positively shocked and enraged.

"*There?* You astound me, Reverend sir! Those or outcasts are in the sheriff's custody; daily he marshalls them from their cells to the dock, and nightly from the dock to their cells. 'He is king of that goodly company.' Lady Montressor, sir, is *your* holy charge; you only are responsible for her appearance, and may make her position as exclusive and as comfortable as you desire."

"Oh, thank heaven! Since it is so then—pray let us find a secluded and—I was going to say pleasant seat—as if such a thing could be found in this place."

"Doubtless, a moderately agreeable one can be found though," said Lord Dazzleright, cheerfully putting aside his anger, and offering his arm to his client, to conduct her through the crowd.

But just as Estelle was about to accept the proffered assistance, she perceived a hurried step approach from behind, and a deep voice speak, at the sound of which, the whole tide of life turned back upon its course, opening her heart, and whelming her senses, in a mist of mingled rapture and anguish.

"Permit me, my lord," the voice said, and gently putting aside the counsel, Lord Montressor took the arm of his bride and drew it within his own.

Estelle's whole being was thrilled with emotion, half ecstasy, half agony, as I said. She turned away her swiftly flushing and paling face, bowed her head and prayed.

"Ah, my lord! my lord! is this act of yours well conceived?—is it prudent?—is it politic?" inquired the good Rector, in distress.

"It is *right*; beyond that I have not considered whether it were politic, or prudent, reverend sir," replied his lordship. Then turning his face most tenderly down towards the lady on his arm, he said in a low voice—

"Estelle, my beloved, will you not look at me?"

She put back her veil, lifted her head, turned up to him a look of profound, unutterable, undying love, then dropped her eyes.

"Speak to me, dearest Stella."

"Ah, my lord! my lord! what can poor Stella say, but echo what the minister said just now—'Was this *well* done, Lord Montressor?'"

"Excellently well done, my Stella! You are my wife! Where should I be, but beside my wife in her trial? Have I not said that I would stand upon the legality of our marriage? How shall I stand by our marriage, and desert my wife? I never contemplated such an inconsistency for a moment! It is true—for that no one should venture to say, or hint, that selfish or unscrupulous passion had governed my actions—I consented to forego my rights and inclinations in favor of your delicate reserve, and yield you up to the care of Mr. Oldfield; and I forebore to intrude, either by visit or letter, upon the sanctuary of your private life. Now, however, the case is widely different. You are before the public, before a judge, charged with a crime, exposed to a severe ordeal. Shall I leave you to tread this wine-press alone? No, no, so help me Heaven, at my bitterest need—no! Before the same public, before the same judge, through all the ordeal, will I stand by your side, and with what manhood, strength and virtue there may be within me, assert my position and your innocence. Nor man, nor demon—world, flesh, nor devil, shall prevent me doing thus! And may Christ so aid me in my greatest extremity as I am true to thee! Amen," he said, and reverently bowed his head.

It was vain to oppose a will like that of Lord Montressor. Besides, he was approved by Lord Dazzleright, and felt to be a tower of strength by Mr. Oldfield.

"We were about to find a comfortable seat for her ladyship," said the counsel.

"I have already found one. Will you go with us, my lord?—and you, reverend sir?" inquired Lord Montressor, bowing to his two friends, and leading the way through the crowd that respectfully divided to let him pass. He had provided a seat in a distant and retired part of the court-room, out of sight of the prisoners' dock, and nearly out of hearing of all that was revolting in the proceedings.

Here she sat, unobserved and unmolested for a time, Lord Montressor, Mr. Oldfield and Lord Dazzleright standing as a living shield between her and the eyes of the crowd. There was little danger now, however, that she should be troubled by the impertinent curiosity of others. For all attention was now turned upon the proceedings of the court at the upper end of the room. The jury was already empanneled, and the first case on the docket called up. It was that of Dlifp Oorak, the Gipsy king,* indicted for the murder of Sir George Bannerman's gamekeeper. He was now arraigned and standing at the bar. All eyes were fixed upon him—a little dark, wiry figure of a man, with sharp features and deep set glittering black eyes, thatched with a wisp of wild black hair, and looking alert, spry and restless, as if in another instant he would break loose, bound over intervening obstacles, clear the door or window, and be away in the free air again!

Even Lady Montressor, notwithstanding the absorbing nature of her own sorrow, fixed her languid eyes upon this savage child of nature, now bound and captive, and in deadly peril of his life, and watched in hope and fear the progress of his short trial. The forms were quickly dispatched; the testimony on both sides heard; the exposition of opposite lawyers made; the charge of the judge delivered; the case given to the jury, and their verdict returned.

"Stand up and confront the jury," was the order given to the prisoner.

"How say you, gentlemen of the jury, is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty?"

For an instant there was a pause and silence in the court, during which you might have heard a heart beat, broken soon by the deep voice of the foreman pronouncing the awful word of doom,

"GUILTY!"

He was only a Gipsy and it had not taken the twelve long to find their verdict.

The prisoner was then asked if he had anything to advance as a just reason why sentence of death should not be pronounced against him.

Dlifp Oorak laughed wildly, shook his black, elf locks, and intimated that since the doom was to be only death, he had no objection to make!—had it been a long imprisonment, now, that were another matter! And the Gipsy chief impatiently stretched his limbs and looked longingly abroad through the tall gothic windows into the free, sunny air!

His attention was gravely recalled by the Judge, who donned the black cap, arose, and proceeded to pronounce sentence.

The Gipsy heard his doom with an indifference and a wandering of the eyes bordering on "contempt of court."

A little delay and bustle ensued, during which the sheriff's officers proceeded to remove the prisoner from court. In going out, they passed very near our group of friends.

Lady Montressor noticed his half-savage, half-childlike demeanor, caught a glance from his wild, deer eyes, and silently offered up the care of his untutored soul to Christ.

This prisoner had scarcely left the court before the second case upon the docket was called. It was that of a young girl charged with the crime of infanticide. The details of this case were so painful, so revolting, that one by one the women in the crowd veiled themselves and silently stole away. While Estelle, the most delicate, sensitive and refined of women, was compelled to sit there, between her friend and her minister, and hear the whole! The trial occupied three hours, and ended as the preceding one had ended—in the conviction of the prisoner and sentence of death.

"So young! Merciful Saviour! so young, and so horribly lost!" cried Lady Montressor, in a stifled voice, covering her eyes to shut out the vision of that girl's white, amazed, insane countenance! As the ruined one passed out under charge of the deputy sheriff, she turned back upon our group of friends, one wild, terrified, appealing gaze, that reminded Estelle of the portrait of the Cenci and remained fixed in her mind forever. She prayed for the lost fellow-creature, and while she prayed the court adjourned.

Mr. Oldfield with a deep sigh arose and was about to offer his arm to his charge, when Lord Montressor, who had remained standing, anticipated him, and drew the hand of Estelle through his own arm. They made slow progress through the crowd, and reached the portico, and went to the street On reaching the carriage, Lord Montressor handed Estelle in, saw her comfortably seated, and then, said:

"Before this tribunal and in public, dearest Stella, I must assert at once our position—your innocence and my rights; but,—that no one shall venture to call in question the motives of my conduct or yours,—I shall refrain from intruding on your private life, until the decision of your case shall have endorsed our union. Farewell, I will meet you here to-morrow, dearest." And pressing her hand, he bowed and gave way to Mr. Oldfield, who immediately entered the carriage; and they drove rapidly to their hotel.

This was the history of the first day at court; and the second and third, and many succeeding days, were like unto it—dreary, depressing, dreadful records of vice, crime and suffering, of every kind and every degree. There were ten capital cases upon the docket. And in that single session of the Assizes at Exeter, Sir James Allan Parke pronounced sentence of death upon seven persons, including the king of the Gipsies,* all of whom were hanged within a week after their conviction.

And day after day, in this fetid atmosphere of guilt and death and horror, Lady Montressor sat and sickened—sickened and despaired to see these poor outcasts of Christianity—these sinning and suffering wrecks of humanity—men, women, and even children, one after another, fall into the horrible pit prepared by their own crimes. For the acquittals were very few. English courts are stern and strict, almost invariably endorsing by their action the warrants of their justice, and the true bills of their grand jury. The numerous, seemingly merciless convictions of the court, wrung her heart not only with the most painful pity for other sufferers, but with despair for herself and for those deeply interested in her fate. And as she heard one after another culprit convicted of theft, poaching, shop-lifting, burglary, or what not,—sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay, and saw the half-brutal, half-demoniac faces of these wretches glare on her as they passed out,—again the vision of the convict ship, and colony, with all their loathsome horrors, darkened around her soul, for she remembered that the crime of which she—even *she*—stood accused, was also a transportable offence; and convictions seemed to be the unvarying rule of this court! And thus, in this foul and deadly atmosphere of sin and sorrow, she sat and sickened and despaired, until the thirteenth day, when her case was called.

It was the first of June, when the sun smiled down in cloudless beauty from the deep blue sky, upon a land green with luxuriant vegetation, blooming and fragrant with flowers, and vocal with the songs of birds. It was a bright, beautiful, glorious day; but to Estelle and her friends a day of darkness, gloom and terror!

The news that the trial would come on that morning had been noised abroad, all over the city, and throughout the county, and had attracted all Exeter to the court-house.

As on preceding days, before leaving her lodgings, for the court, Lady Montressor prayed long and earnestly. And then deeply veiled, and leaning on the arm of the venerable pastor, she came out, to enter the carriage. The populace, who had at last discovered her lodgings and identified her carriage, were now gathered into a dense crowd before the hotel, waiting to see this interesting prisoner. Short as was the distance from the portico to the coach, and deeply veiled as was the lady, she shuddered in passing through this crowd, whose gaze she could not see, but keenly, deeply, *felt* fixed upon her form. Mr. Oldfield quickly and nervously handed her into the coach, followed her, took his seat, put up the blinds and let down the curtains; and having thus carefully closed up the carriage, gave orders to the coachman to drive on. They drove perforce slowly through the crowded streets that became more thronged, at every square, as they approached the court house. When at last the coach drew up before the Hall, Mr. Oldfield alighted, and in the same quick, nervous manner, handed her out, and attempted to hurry her through the crowd that thronged around, and into the court house, and choked up its portico, entrance hall and staircase.

Estelle looked wildly around upon this vast and curious multitude. Among the carriages that blocked up the street before the building, she recognized the liveries of many of her former friends, and in the crowd that thronged into the court-house she identified many of the guests who had been bidden to that wedding breakfast to which she had never returned. Since that fatal day to this—perhaps more fatal one—she had not seen or heard from one of them! Why came they now?—to gloat over her calamities? Who could tell? None but the Searcher of hearts! but their presence here made *her* heart sink; true, it was a trifle added to the great sum of her misery; but it was only an added feather that is said to have broken the camel's back. These thoughts had scarcely passed through her mind, when she saw Lord Montressor emerge from the crowd on the portico and come down the steps to join her.

"A few hours more of fortitude, dear Stella, and you will be free!" he said, as he drew her hand within his arm. He then bowed to Mr. Oldfield, and called a police-officer whom he directed to precede and clear a way for them through the crowd. And then with his fine head erect and uncovered, and with a mien as self-possessed and dignified as that with which he had a month ago led his bride into the church, he now led her through the crowded portico and passage-way, and up the staircase into the court.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

---

* A fact.

* A fact.

UP, BROTHERS, UP!

BY C. D. STUART.

Up, brothers, up! the light begins,
Along the eastern sky,
To promise that the night is past,
And better days are nigh;
A clarion voice rings o'er the hills,
The valleys catch the sound—
And Freedom is the stirring cry
That fills the earth around!

It pierces through the fading gloom,
Its strength the peasant feels,
And old oppression from its throne
With shame and terror reels;
All men lift up their heart and hands,
More fearless and more free,
And loud ring out the common shout,
No more we'll bend the knee!

From smithy forge, from fisher's cot,
From ploughs that break the lea,
From iron looms, from smoking mines,
From ships that cleave the sea,
One voice is heard, and mightier
Sweeps on, and ever on!
The tyrant's day, the vassal's task,
Are gone, forever gone!

Up, brothers, up! and share the light;
Rejoice! the day has come
When Freedom decks the lowest shrine,
And guards the poorest home:
Rejoice! and pledge with strengthening ties
The new-born heart and mind,
To keep the boon and pass it on
To all of human kind.

Rejoice! that ye have broke at length
The thong and heavy chain,
Which neither age nor human strength
Can bind ye with again;
Rejoice! and swear ye will not bend,
Nor give the guerdon back,
Though glistening steel disputes the way,
And flame is on your track.

THE
TEMPTER AND THE TEMPTED.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Did you sell him that case of goods, Edward?" said Mr. Craig, speaking to a young man who had just parted with a customer at the door, and was walking back along one of the aisles of boxes. with his sales book in his hand.

"No, sir," replied the clerk. He did not speak cheerfully. His failure to make a sale to the customer had a little dashed his spirits.

"Why not?"

"I couldn't recommend the colors as fast," said the young man.

"Indeed!" There was something of surprise and something of impatience in the merchant's voice.

"That was the simple difficulty, uncle James," replied the clerk, in a firm voice, and with a steady eye. "If I could have spoken confidently in regard to the colors, he would have taken the case."

"How did you know the colors were defective?" inquired Mr. Craig. He did not seem at all angry with the young man.

"I saw a letter from one of our Western customers, who bought a case of the same goods."

Mr. Craig stood musing for some moments.

"I must have a little earnest talk with you, Edward," he then said, kindly, but seriously. And he retired with the young man, his nephew, into his private counting room.

Mr. James Craig was a merchant in New York, and Edward Forsyth, who was in his twentieth year, was the son of his youngest sister, a widow. On a visit to his sister, who lived fifty miles from New York, Mr. Craig met his nephew for the first time in four years, and was particularly pleased with him. Edward was clerk in a country store, where he had been for over a year. Mr. Craig observed him closely, and saw that he was bright and active, and had a turn for business.

"I think I shall have to take Edward to New York with me," said he to his sister, one morning.

But Mrs. Forsyth shook her head.

"I'm afraid of the city, James," was her seriously spoken answer.

"The city is just as safe as the country," replied Mr. Craig. "It all depends upon a young man's associations. Virtue is not alone confined to the woods, and fields and flower gardens. That is one of the popular errors cherished by country people—a sort of rural superstition. We have as good associations, and quite as untainted a moral atmosphere in New York, as you have in Olney. Edward is pure and right-minded. I have already discovered that. Let him go any where, and he will seek companions who are congenial. Like draws to like, you know. You may set your heart to rest on that subject, Alice. If he were viciously inclined, he would seek out the vicious here—they are to be found everywhere. The danger is not on the outside. The heart is its own tempter."

"What would you do with Edward in New York?" asked Mrs. Forsyth.

"Take him into my own store, and into my own family. He will make a splendid business man. All he wants is opportunity. I have observed him closely among his country customers, and am satisfied that all he wants is a little training, and a little experience, to make him equal to the best salesman I have ever seen. Such ability ought not to be lost here."

Mr. Craig was rich, his sister poor, and Edward active and ambitious. So, all things favored this removal of the young man from Olney to New York. The change took place about two months after his uncle's return to the city.

A very careful eye did the thrifty merchant keep upon his nephew, in whom he saw qualities, which, if rightly trained, were destined to make him, before the lapse of a great many years, a man of note in the mercantile world.

The incident, mentioned at the beginning of our story, occurred about two months after Edward's removal to New York.

"I must have a little earnest talk with you," said Mr. Craig, and they retired into the merchant's private office.

"You should have sold that case of goods, Edward," said Mr. Craig, as he handed a chair to the young man, and took another in front of him. There was not the slightest tone that indicated feeling at the loss of the sale in the uncle's voice. But, his whole manner was kind and frank, and intended to put Edward entirely at his ease.

"I have already stated the difficulty in the way," was replied. "I could not recommend the colors."

"You were not required to know any thing about the colors," said Mr. Craig, with a smile, and in a tone that were meant to produce the impression that his nephew was rather an unsophiscated young man. "Your business was to sell the goods."

"I could not say that the colors were fast, when I knew that they were not." Edward spoke firmly, while the flush grew warmer in his face.

"Of course you could not; for that would have been a falsehood, and no merchant ever gains any-thing in the end by direct lying, or bold false pretences. The best reputation a house can have, is a reputation for upright dealing. But, there is such a thing as being too upright, Edward; and this is just the matter I wish to impress upon your mind. That case of goods, you are aware, cost us within a fraction of the other goods in the same invoice. Having bought, we must sell it, and let it work out its own salvation. Now, if I had been dealing with the customer who was in your hands, and he had questioned me in regard to the colors in that case of goods, I would have answered, as I pointed to the manufacturer's mark—

"'The —— mills have the highest reputation in the country for stability of color.' And that would have been stating nothing but the truth. He would have bought. What then? Our house would have sustained no injury. Only the reputation of the —— mills would have suffered; the responsibility resting just where it belonged."

The eyes of the young man fell to the floor, and he sat in deep thought for some time, while the gaze of his uncle was fixed intently upon him.

"You apprehend the difference," said Mr. Craig, breaking in upon his nephew's state of abstraction.

"I think I do," replied Edward.

"Nothing is clearer," said Mr. Craig, speaking in a very decided way. "Nothing is clearer. The true salesman keeps always in view the best points in an article of merchandise, and, if there be any defects—and nothing is perfect in this world—he leaves them in the shade. Don't you see, that if the customer's thought were turned to defects rather than excellence, he would be deterred from buying."

The mind of Edward was not satisfied. He did not see as clearly as his uncle desired, and said something about justice between man and man.

"Let me show you the matter in another light," said Mr. Craig. "The salesman's duty to his employer is to sell his goods, and he is under obligation to do so to the best of his ability. Now, it may happen that the goods of a neighboring merchant are either cheaper, or of superior quality. What then? Shall the salesman, in his regard for justice between man and man, as you say, divulge this fact to his customer, and thus lose the sale he might otherwise have made? How would you act in such a case? Let me press the question home. Suppose you knew that our neighbor Allison had bought a few cases of French silks at auction twenty per cent. below what we had paid for the same goods, and that, in endeavoring to make the sale of a case, the question were put to you, whether we were selling as low as the goods were to be had in the market. What answer would you make?"

The young man sat thoughtful for some moments. The peculiarly kind and insinuating manner of his uncle, and the ingenious way in which he advanced his propositions, were rather clouding his perceptions, and he felt some light touches of shame at having shown himself a little old-fashioned in his notions of trade morals.

"I certainly should not tell him that he could buy cheaper next door," replied Edward, smiling, yet reddening as he spoke.

"No; I would hardly look for such excessive verdancy in my clear-headed nephew," said Mr. Craig. "But, let me hear how you would answer, or evade his direct question."

"It would be easy enough to blind him," replied the young man, who was remarkably quick-thoughted. "I could say, that we were in the habit of buying as low as our neighbors, and selling at as small an advance as any in the trade. Or, that we made less profit on the goods offered than upon many articles of which we sold ten cases to one. Or—but, there are a hundred ways in which a customer, who is over sharp in his questions, may be answered, yet not enlightened. I could do it easily enough. There is no trouble so far as that is concerned."

"Very well, Edward," said Mr. Craig. "That is just what I want you to do with all customers who seek the kind of information it is not our interest to impart. I wish you to be very wise in all that pertains to my interests, and very ignorant in all that would militate against them. Your duty, as a salesman, is to your employer, not to his customer. Set down this axiom on the first page of your book of mercantile morals."

When Edward Forsyth went out from the private counting-room of his uncle, after much more had been said to him than we can here record, he was not, in all things, the same young man he was before that all-important interview. Mr. Craig was a merchant who believed in the doctrine, "Every man for himself," and lived fully up to his belief. He regarded all merchants as so many keen sharpers, and he scrupled not to be even with the sharpest—always, however, working with great skill, and never losing sight of the fact, that a general reputation for fair dealing was the best capital in trade that a merchant could have. At this, and subsequent interviews with Edward, he succeeded in breaking down all his over-nice scruples, as he called them, and fully indoctrinating him in his peculiar code of morals.

From that time, Edward Forsyth gave himself wholly up to his uncle's business views, and ere long, scrupled not to take the broadest advantage of a customer, whenever it could be done safely. So well pleased was Mr. Craig, that, in the course of a year or two, he advanced him, by gradual stages, to a position of high trust in the business. Singularly enough, he had the most unbounded confidence in the young man's integrity, so far as his interests were concerned; notwithstanding they had been often in close conference, discussing schemes, and drawing out plans of operations, by which individual gain might be secured at the expense of a general loss. Remarkably shrewd, in this line of business, did Edward grow from year to year, and his uncle saw reason to stimulate this shrewdness by giving him a per centage of profit on all successful speculations projected by him, and on all business which his personal efforts could increase.

At twenty-five, Edward Forsyth was in advance of his preceptor, and scrupled not at any degree of unfair dealing which he was able to gloss over so entirely as to hide its true quality. His uncle's customers were not the only ones upon whom he exercised his skill, or between whom and himself he threw up a blind. As he grew older, he naturally grew, fed by the peculiar kind of mental aliment upon which he existed, more and more intensely selfish. Regard for his uncle's interests changed, naturally, into a single regard for himself; and at the age we have mentioned, twenty-five, the ambition to be rich so fully possessed him, that he resolved to acquire wealth at all hazards.

Who was most in his power? His blindly confiding uncle, or the shrewd, watchful, alert public? We need not answer the question. The apt scholar had gone far beyond his master.

With exceeding circumspection did Edward take his initiative in the work of changing the relation of certain property—transferring it from his uncle's possession to his own; or rather, in its transmission from other parties, letting a large excess, beyond what was right, come to himself, while his uncle fully believed that an equitable division had been made. Edward found a ready justification in his own thoughts, if conscience showed the smallest inclination to be troublesome, by assuming that in these transactions the advantage was mainly due to his shrewdness, and that there was no justice in giving his uncle the lion's share.

Soon, the whole current of the young man's thoughts ran in one direction.

"I am determined to be rich," he said, communing with himself. "Money is power—money gives position—money is everything in this world. I have worked long enough for my uncle, who seems to grow greedier of gain as he grows older. I am now going to work *for* myself, though not *by* myself. My opportunities, as things now stand, are too good to be lightly abandoned. I shall not cut loose, until my vessel is well freighted, and I have an open sea and fair wind."

Gradually, but surely, did Edward, from this period, get the business of his uncle so much under his control, that his mind became ubiquitous in every part of it. There was not a transaction of any importance in which he was not a prominent negotiator, and many of their largest customers dealt with him as a principal. His policy now was, to induce a state of easy indifference upon the mind of his uncle—to think for him in all matters of business, and so let him fall into a state of confiding indolence. Everything worked to his entire satisfaction. Then he suggested remotely, that Mr. Craig should go abroad, and make certain desirable connexions in London and Paris. The thought was pleasant to Mr. Craig. Relieved from the heavy pressure of business by his active, competent nephew, he was beginning to have a desire for change of recreation. He had never been to Paris or London, and the idea of going there was quite agreeable.

Edward did not press the matter. That might have awakened a suspicion; and he was beginning to fear that the subject had been dismissed from the thoughts of his uncle, when the latter said to him one morning:

"Edward—do you think I could be spared for two or three months?"

"How spared?" The young man knew well enough what he meant, for he had acquired the power of almost reading his uncle's thoughts, so close were his habits of observation in this direction.

"Spared for a trip across the ocean," replied Mr. Craig.

"O yes," was answered in a cheerful manner. "I think we can get along without you for that length of time. When do you think of going?"

"If I go at all, it will be on the first of next month. How stand our business matters, in view of my absence?"

"I know of nothing that lies in the way of your taking a brief respite," said the nephew. "Doubtless, I can manage everything alone. for so brief a space of time."

Mr. Craig was in earnest. Having the utmost confidence in his nephew, both as regarded capacity and integrity, he saw no reason to hesitate on the question of leaving everything under his control. It never for an instant crossed his mind that the young man whom he had so thoroughly imbued with his peculiar notions of business, might be tempted to sin against him, as he was in the habit of sinning against fellow-men, almost daily.

All things arranged for leaving, Mr. Craig executed a Power of Attorney in favor of his nephew, giving him the right to sign checks and notes, make acceptances, and transact all things relating to the business in his name—thus by a single stroke of the pen, giving him the entire control over tens of thousands of dollars.

The temptation proved too strong for Edward's weakened principle. Years of unscrupulous overreaching in trade; of systematic wrong practiced towards others; of eager grasping after gain, had ripened him for this opportunity. Mr. Craig had taught him too thoroughly in the school of neighborly disregard, to leave anything in that direction for the young man to learn. Together, with how much care and skill had they plotted against the world; and how successfully had they executed their schemes! Now, the more eager, active plotter, had his fellow almost wholly in his power, and, as just said, the temptation was too strong for him.

Mr. Craig had been in London two months, when he received a letter from a merchant in New York—an old friend—containing this remark, which seemed to be thrown in incidentally.

"Your nephew has made a very handsome investment in uptown lots, which shows his shrewdness. In five years, they will be worth more than twice their present value."

He had letters of the same date from Edward, who wrote him by every steamer; always with the amplest business details, and always showing things to be in a prosperous condition. But no reference was made to any transactions of his own.

Mr. Craig pondered this sentence in the merchant's letter, turning it over and over again in his mind, and viewing it on every side. The more he considered it, the more it troubled him. Yet, he could not, for an instant, question the young man's faithfulness to his trust. He would almost have doubted himself as well. Doubted himself! In his own eyes, he was an honorable merchant. A high-minded man. If he had overreached others in ways innumerable, that was only in legitimate business transactions.

It was a fact very well known to Mr. Craig, that Edward made some money in their joint speculations, and that the per centage of profits in some cases had been quite an important item in the young man's favor.

"He has merely invested his own money," said the merchant to himself, arguing against his vague fears; and he thus dismissed the subject from a prominent place in his mind, and turned his thoughts to an enjoyment of the many new sources of pleasure which a first visit abroad opened to him. A week later, and the paragraph in a letter from the same friend, disturbed his peace. It ran thus:

"Your nephew made a singularly fortunate speculation in stocks last week. I am told that he realized, in a single operation, over forty thousand dollars. Is the transaction a joint account?"

That was all on the subject. But it was enough to awaken a host of unpleasant doubts in the mind of Mr. Craig.

A letter from Edward, received about the same time, contained the first item of unpleasant news which the young man had seen fit to communicate. It was thus stated:

"I am sorry to disturb you with the fact, that Messrs. A—— and B——, of St. Louis, have failed. Our account against them is ten thousand dollars. The failure, as far I am able to learn, will be a bad one. Of course, I have taken the most prompt measures required by our interests in the case. I mention this failure as in duty bound! Oh, pray do not let it mar your enjoyments, nor shorten the period of your visit abroad. Trust me to do all that you could possibly do, were you here yourself."

At the end of three months from the time Mr. Craig left New York, he made hurried preparations for returning. The tenor of certain letters, received while in Lyons, startled him into a fearful suspicion that the young man he had trusted so implicitly, was playing him foul.

"It is my opinion," wrote his old mercantile friend, "that you had better be at home. I may be a little old-fogyish in my notions of business—I think you once said as much—but I cannot resist the impression that your nephew is running a little wild. I heard him boasting, a day or two since, that your house would sell two dollars this year to one sold last season. Now, it is easy enough to sell goods as you know, and to scatter them over all creation. But making collections is another thing. You may have confidence in Edward's judgment, and feel satisfied that he is dealing prudently. All very well this to feed your complacent self-security. But this I know, he sold a new firm in the west, as I have learned, a very heavy bill of goods this week, when I would have refused them credit to the amount of five hundred dollars. Why, you ask? Simply, because the report touching their mercantile standing at home reads thus: "No capital, and no credit here." I am cognizant of another sale quite as wild as this. So, my advice is, for you to come home at once, and look closely into the state of your business.

On the next morning Mr. Craig started from Lyons, and in three weeks he was in New York. His movements had been so hurried, that no letters announcing his coming, could precede him, and the first intimation Edward had of his arrival, was the publication of his name among those of the passengers, given in an extra issued within an hour after the steamer had touched the wharf.

Edward was sitting alone in the private counting-room, when the extra was laid before him. Almost the first word that met his eye, as he glanced down upon the sheet, was the name of Mr. Craig, as a passenger. He started, and for an instant his mind was in whirl of confused thoughts and feelings. His uncle had returned too soon for him by a whole month! Just that time was needed for the completion of his well-digested plans, by which not less than two-thirds of that uncle's property would have been left in a condition to fall easily into his hands, and in a way the most difficult to trace to his designing.

For about ten minutes Edward sat as motionless as a statue. Then, taking from the fire-proof a large pocket-book, which he concealed on his person, he left the counting-room, and passed from the store without a word to any one. Five minutes later, we find him in a retired room, away up in the fourth story of a large building in the neighborhood of the exchange. As he entered, locking the door behind him, he said to the only person who was in the room, speaking in an excited voice:

"Mr. Craig has just arrived in the steamer!"

The man started to his feet, with a profane expression, and a countenance filled with sudden alarm. For some moments the two men stood looking at each other in silence, and with blank faces.

"What does it mean?" was at length inquired

"It means everything for us," replied Edward Forsyth. "What mocking fiend has whispered suspicion in his ears?"

"Will you see him?" asked the man.

"No! By midnight I must be far from here. See him! A month from this day, and I could have met him with a face as calm as a June morning. He would have been completely in my toils, and. almost without exciting a suspicion, my plans would have worked themselves out to certain results. Now, with suspicion awakened, as it must be, he would discover my game in less than twenty-four hours—do all I could to prevent it. So, nothing is left to me but a hurried flight. In this pocket-book are bills of acceptance amounting to something like fifty thousand dollars. I will remain here just long enough to make the proper endorsements, under my power of attorney, so as to enable you to negotiate them on the street to-day, and then take cars for Albany, where I wish you to join me to-morrow morning. After we have fully matured our plans, you can return to the city. My own course is not yet decided."

The old adage about honor among rogues may be true enough, but it refers to rogues' honor, as confiding rogues have from time immemorial discovered. Edward Craig had found it impossible to work successfully against his uncle, without an accomplice, who was an old friend; but, like his uncle, he forgot that an accomplice in dishonest practices is never to be trusted.

To Albany the young man fled, and there awaited, in trembling suspense, the arrival of his friend. But that friend, after negotiating a large amount of the business paper given into his hands, and carefully considering the question of his own interest in the case, concluded that he had more to gain by an abandonment of Edward to his fate, than by any further complicity with him. So, on the next morning, he called upon Mr. Craig, and returned him bills to the amount of seven or eight thousand dollars, saying that he had failed to negotiate these out of a number that had been placed in his hands to sell. As a blind he handed over a check for three thousand dollars, the proceeds of certain notes alleged to have been discounted. He did not stop here; but managed to start the rumor that Edward was in Albany. No one could trace the rumor to its source; but it set telegraphs and police officers in motion, and on the next day the unhappy young man was an inmate of the Tombs.

Three months afterwards he was brought forth to the gaze of curious thousands, and placed at the bar for trial. Suffering had wrought upon him a fearful work; but he maintained a cold, almost defiant air. He had the best counsel that could be procured in New York, and, after a protracted trial, escaped conviction. His uncle failed on the day the jury brought in their verdict of not guilty, under the indictment. Failed hopelessly. The ruin of his fortunes was complete.

One week later, and Mr. Craig, who had passed through a day of almost heart-breaking trials, was sitting, gloomy and silent, in the midst of his troubled family, whose eyes were turned fearfully towards the dark and threatening future, when the servant came to the door, and said that a gentleman was in the parlor.

"Did he send up his name?" asked Mr. Craig.

"No, sir," replied the servant. "I asked his name, but he declined giving it."

"Say that I will be down in a few minutes."

After assuming a composed exterior, Mr Craig went down to meet this unknown visitor. As he entered the parlor a man arose from one of the sofas, and advanced towards the centre of the room.

"Edward!" exclaimed Mr. Craig, stopping suddenly. Indignation and surprise were in his voice.

The young man paused, and fixed his eyes steadily upon the face of his uncle. He was very pale, but his tightly-closed lips and unwavering gaze showed that he had come with a purpose.

"It maddens me—this bold assurance!" exclaimed Mr. Craig, stamping upon the floor. "How dare you look me in the face?"

"Is the tempter a higher being than the tempted, that he may spurn his victim?" said Edward Forsyth, in a deep voice, and with measured utterance. "It is in vain, sir. On me all your virtuous indignation is lost."

"Peace, viper! Begone! I warmed you in my bosom, and you have stung me to the death in return! Out of my presence! and do not add wanton insult to the deepest injury one man can inflict upon another."

But Edward stood perfectly calm.

"It is all in vain, sir," he replied, in the same deep voice. "You cannot reach me by any such words. I am here, to-night, for a purpose, and will retire after my work is done. And my first business is to convict you of a crime."

"Beware, Edward!" Mr. Craig spoke, in a warning tone.

"The crime of corrupting a young man, the son of your only sister—thank God that He did not permit her to see this day!—who came to you with his mother's parting words, 'be just, my son, towards all men,' in his heart. Very adroitly, and with nice insinuation, did you instil a different philosophy into his mind, teaching him the specious art of using words to conceal the truth, in order that you might gain at the price of another's loss. You taught him to wrong his neighbor for your benefit; and weakly imagined that he would not use his skill for his own ends as well as yours, when the opportunity came. But you made a terrible mistake. The corrupt heart is liege to no one."

Before these sentences were half finished Mr. Craig had sunk almost nerveless into a chair.

"I studied deeply your mode of mercantile morals. and became a thorough proficient in the practice thereof, as you are well aware," continued Edward Forsyth. "We hunted together with a keen scent, and rarely missed our prey. You grew richer every day, and I less scrupulous. We cared not who lost, so that we gained."

Edward paused for some moments, but as his uncle showed no inclination to reply, he added, in a changed voice, though still in an impressive manner—

"As men plant, so will they reap. As the seed is, so will the fruit be. You drew me aside from the path of honor and of truth, in which my sainted mother placed my feet, and your reward is with you. Men say that you are ruined in fortune. I hear it on all sides. Ah! what a light thing is that to a ruined reputation—and how light a thing is even that to a blighted honor."

Here Edward showed the first signs of emotion. But he recovered himself, and went on, drawing from beneath his arm a thick packet of papers, as he spoke.

"Suffering, uncle James, has done, I trust, the salutary work it was designed to accomplish. I mean to begin the world again, but far from here. under an assumed name, and on the precept of my mother, which you swept aside with your specious reasonings—'be just, my son, towards all men.' I may not grow rich under the precept, but I will be a better and happier man than I have been during the past six years. And now, sir, let me restore to you all the property yet in my possession. You will find it quite sufficient, I trust, to stay the course of events which men say is sweeping you to hopeless ruin. These papers contain the unreserved transfer of property, in value not less than fifty thousand dollars. Yesterday I called it mine. To-day it is yours; and I go forth into the world again, penniless, but with cleaner hands. and, I trust, a purer heart than have been mine for years. Farewell! And may you be wiser and better for this lesson and this hour!"

As he said these last words, Edward Forsyth laid the papers of which he had spoken upon a table, and turning off abruptly, left the house. ere Mr. Craig had sufficiently recovered from his surprise to make an effort to retain him. He never saw him afterwards, and never heard of him, though he made many efforts to discover the place to which he had gone. On his death, his will was found to contain a particular reference to Edward, with intimations that the young man was far less to blame for the acts which had ruined his fortunes and blasted his reputation, than some others who had wholly escaped public censure. Then followed:—"I give and bequeath to my said nephew, Edward Forsyth, the sum of twenty thousand dollars, and direct that notice of this legacy be published for the space of one year in three New York papers of the widest circulation, unless within that time my said nephew should come forward and claim this bequest."

But the legacy was never claimed. Whether the nephew had also passed that bourne from which no traveler returns; or whether, still living, his spirit shrunk from the identification that must accompany his claim under the will, is altogether unknown. At the expiration of a certain legal period, the sum bequeathed passed to the residuary legate, and there the matter closed—the tempter and the tempted alike forgotten in the eager, contending, grasping world of trade, where once they had wrought out success with as little scruple in regard to the means, as the most selfish and unscrupulous in the land. Their history has its moral, and that is with the reader.

THE SOURCE OF FAT IN ANIMALS.

During the course of the past year, experiments have been made in France to prove that the fat of animals exceeded the quantity which could be referred to the food they were supplied with. The chief experiments were made on ducks. Some were fed on rice, a substance which contains only a few parts of fat in the thousand. Others were fed on rice, with a certain amount of butter added. At the end of the experiment, the first were as lean as when first placed upon the diet; the latter, in a few days, became positively balls of fat. Other experiments were made on pigs. It was found, as the result of several trials, that there was more fat produced than was contained in the food on which they were fed, and that pigs fed for six months on potatoes yielded no more fat than was contained in the food they consumed. Food which, given alone, has not the properties of fattening, when mixed with a fatty matter, acquires the property to an astonishing degree; and fattening articles of food, which do not contain much fat, always abound with its chemical constituents, the principal of which is azote, and from whence the fat acquired is certainly derived.

FONDNESS OF INSECTS FOR MUSIC.

Most animals, and even insects, are not insensible to the pleasure of music. There are few musicians, perhaps, who have not seen spiders suspend themselves by their threads in order to be near the instruments. Dr. Burney, in his "History of Music," relates the following anecdote:—"An officer being shut up in the Bastile, had permission to carry with him a lute, on which he was an excellent performer; but he had scarcely made use of it for three or four days, when the mice issuing from their holes, and the spiders suspending themselves from the ceiling by their threads, assembled around him to participate in his melody. His aversion to these creatures made their visit at first disagreeable, and induced him to lay aside this recreation; but he soon was so accustomed to them, that they became a source of amusement."

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1857.

OUR ONLY TERMS.—Single copies, $2 per annum, two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12; Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. It will be useless for parties to write us insisting on our taking large clubs at lower rates. An elegant family paper like the LEDGER, (containing no advertisements, and beautifully illustrated,) cannot be afforded at less than these terms. We do not want any clubs formed in towns where there are news-offices established. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper.

ALL LETTERS must be addressed to ROBERT BONNER, NEW YORK LEDGER office, No. 44 Ann street, New York.

REJECTED MANUSCRIPTS.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

HOMES FOR THE POOR.

Within a few years extensive steps have been taken by some philanthropic capitalists of London, to provide model dwelling, lodging, and eating houses for the worthy laboring poor; where, at a cost within the scope of their small earnings, they might have the comforts of a clean, quiet home, and the luxury of baths and reading-rooms. The first experiments were made in the suburbs of the city, on the lines of railroad, where land could be had cheap, and extensive blocks of buildings were erected in a substantial manner, finished within plainly, and more with reference to convenience and good ventilation than show; each house having its little flower and grass plot in front, and a garden for the cultivation of vegetables in the rear. The cost of each dwelling was but trifling, the ground-rent still less, so that the mason, the carpenter, the artizan, or laboring man of whatever stamp, earning even but two shillings sterling per day, could afford to rent a model house and provide his family with all the decencies of life.

London is a city some twelve miles in diameter, and from the centre to the circumference, where these buildings are erected, would be, from the tortuity of the streets, eight or ten miles—apparently a very inconvenient distance for the workingman to travel twice a day to and from his labor. To obviate this inconvenience the model houses were erected, as we have said, near the lines of railroad piercing in various directions from the heart of the city, and provisions were made by which the laborer, with his certificate, could ride into and out of the city for a penny each way, at any hour of the morning and evening. Each block of model houses was calculated for from two hundred to three hundred families, and to each a bath and reading-room, well provided with papers and books, was supplied. The right to enjoy these was made common to every house-renter—an agent of the capitalists having supervisory care, to prevent abuses. Lectures, also, were occasionally furnished; some by provision connected with the rents, and some volunteered by well-wishers of these poor, but honest and industrious communities.

The first experiments worked so admirably, that they were immediately imitated in nearly all the suburbs of the city, and comfortable homes were thus provided for tens of thousands, who, cramped within the heart and amid the filth of a mart like London, would have lived lives of destitution and misery—to say nothing of the diseases avoided by a residence where the air was pure and invigorating, and where children could take cheerful and happy exercise in sporting on the greensward. After a little time schools were attached to these communities, and to the physical comfort of the rising generation was added the wealth and refinement of education—the noblest and surest wealth of the poor. These model dwellings soon suggested, in various parts of the city, model lodging houses, where the poor wayfarer, or homeless laborer, could have a bath and sleep in a clean bed, for three pence; and close upon the lodging, followed model eating houses for the poor—all proving equally successful, and why not, as well as model prisons?

In the city of New York are thousands of industrious poor families, now suffering for some such benevolent—yet good interest-paying—enterprise; an enterprise which, in the city's suburbs or across the rivers, might be carried out with greater facility than in London, and which would pay the capitalist more than legal interest on his money. Here ground and building materials are cheaper, water for baths is more abundant, and the cost of schools, and of books and newspapers for reading-rooms, less by two-thirds than in London. We have among us men of wealth who might perpetuate their memories to future generations by turning an earnest thought to this great subject, and starting a work which would entail incalculable blessing upon thousands. It would be better, even, for the city to provide in this manner for the poor, than to pay millions in taxes to support its pauperism and partial charities, as it now does. But the greatest of all reasons for the work, is the physical, moral and intellectual well-being of the poor. Give them clean and comfortable homes, education and health, and their total regeneration would be as certain as the light of heaven.

◆

PLYMOUTH ROCK.

We saw recently a fragment of Plymouth Rock, that Cabœa of the "Puritan Fathers," in sight of which, more than two and a quarter centuries ago, the preciously freighted May-Flower cast anchor, and sent to the shore of the New World, amid the snow and tempests of winter and a savage-peopled wilderness, a little band of the bravest hearts and most God-trusting souls that ever planted a nation. It was but a fragment, a mere bit of greenish flinty looking-stone, cut into a brooch—but as small as it was, leading us back in imagination to 1620, and from thence forward through the mighty revolutions that have sprung from the landing of those pilgrims, it seemed to glow with associations and aspirations, and to magnify into a vast rock—a mountain—against which a continent-wide nation might securely rest. We do not wonder that the hearts of New England turn to that rock, against which the wintry winds and seas sung to the landing of the Pilgrims—that they turn to it, under God, as to a sacred shrine. It will fill a prouder place in the future than the pillar of Hercules, or the desert-mocking pyramids. It is grafted on the memory and in the affections of a people, who can never forget those heroic fathers, who, exiling themselves from native land, dared the perils of ocean and wilderness, that themselves and their children might have glorious Liberty,

A CASTE LEVELLER.

In all countries but our own, the careful and even the casual observer, can divide the castes and classes of people by their dress, equipages, &c. Here, all such standards of judgment measureably fail. The artizan and servant are empowered, through good wages, to don a fac-simile of the garbs of their employers, and being facile in imitation of manners, it is often utterly impossible on our gayest thoroughfares to detect which is Miss Bridget, and which Mrs. Potiphar—which the day laborer, and which the retired nabob. Bridget works for Mrs. Potiphar, and knows and, of course, patronizes Mrs. P.'s milliner and mantua-maker. She puts on as many flounces and as deep-pointed lace as her "missus," and often vies with her in the richness of her wardrobe. It is not remarkable, therefore, that she is often mistaken for "the lady."

Just so, the clerk and apprentice know their employer's and boss's tailor, hatter and boot-maker, and here the imitations are so nice, the manners being equal, as to defy the most artistic scrutiny. Indeed, Pompey and Susannah, in all but their ebony, flaunt in the cut and colors of the *haut ton*, so that any Pharisaical aristocratic caste may well feel annoyed and disgusted in the common manner in which the shine is taken from all their adorning endeavors. Even in the matter of equipages, the livery stables will furnish Tom, Dick or Harry, for a moderate sum, just as fine turn-outs, the vehicles bearing just as lordly and legitimate panels, as those of old Linsey Woolsey, the retired "merchant prince," or Mr. Tallow Chandler, who lives on the interest of his hard earned "plum." And as to houses, many are the employees who rent finer ones and furnish them more splendidly, and give better parties in them, than scores of the self-elected elite.

One capital result flows from all this. It is found impossible to found any caste on mere external show. If an order of exclusive aristocracy or nobility is to be founded here, it will have to be one of absolute intrinsic excellence. It must rest solely on superior intelligence and manners. At present, the prospect of such a caste is not the most flattering on the part of the self-styled aristocracy, for it is a fact that the best intelligence and manners do not lodge with either end or extreme of society. These invaluable accomplishments find a home in the middle and unpretending classes. Therefore, Bridget's rivalry with Mrs. Potiphar, and Bob's diversions among the *haut ton*, and even Pompey's aspirations to the latest and highest fashions, are to be encouraged rather than condemned. The end of the matter will be that, by and by, all parties will see that mere bedizening body shows, carriage shows, and house shows, are a waste, not only of money, but of comfort, philosophy and good taste. Then we shall have more simplicity, yet more real elegance; and if lines are drawn in society, they will be drawn on the strength of superior intelligence, manners, and moral excellence.

◆

DEBT!

Observant readers of the LEDGER—you who have lived long enough in the world to have much of the tutorage of experience, whether your lot has been cast in the populous city, the quiet village, or the still more quiet country, in the stricter sense of the word—we appeal to you: "Is not that word deserving of the exclamation point we have affixed to it?"

We speak not, now, of obligations carefully and wisely assumed in the due course of a legitimate business. Whether incurred by the man employed in the primitive and ever-honorable labors of the farmer, who really needs a little more land, and safely buys it on credit, or by him who has land which he needs money to improve, or by the citizen who is discreetly engaged in commerce, or pursuing his mechanical trade, we have no words wherewith to condemn "debt." We allude to it under a different class of circumstances—to its incurrence, when it might be, and therefore *should* be, avoided—when very different motives from those enumerated above have invited it. Shall we—need we—name them? We trow not. They are patent in the results—the woeful results all around us—in the fine houses, and finer furniture and equipages, that are "owned" but not paid for—in the gaudy garments and glittering jewels worn by people who, all their acquaintances well know, cannot afford them!

Such debtors are double slaves. They are slaves to their vanity, and slaves to their creditors. Once their masters could have asserted their control by putting them in prison in this State. In some of the States that is still the creditor's legal money. Who shall say it would not serve *some* debtors right, however absurd and unjust to the honest and really unfortunate debtor, such a course would be?

Yes! Debt is a species of enslavement, and, as such, an evil to be shunned—often a "crying evil." Let all, who can, avoid it as they would the pestilence.

◆

AVENGERS OF CRIME.

Most assuredly every crime has its avenger. And the greater the crime, the more certainly will it be avenged. Petty crimes may be committed by persons of indifferent moral consciousness; but great crimes, never! In either case, the laws may be defrauded; discovery may be evaded; public justice may languish for atonement, but the direct victim of the crime goes not unavenged, and the criminal cannot escape his inevitable doom. Human tribunals may reach him not, but the eye of the Eternal God is ever on him, withering his soul with that deep, damning consciousness, which is his own everlasting testimony against himself. He may stand unrevealed in the glare of mid-day before the world; he may mingle with the crowd, unsuspected, yet in the most solitary place, in the darkness of the night, in his "vexed sleep," even, he cannot escape the eye of God—he cannot hide from himself. Alone, remote from men, he startles at every footstep, he shrinks at every touch, he trembles in the presence of his own thoughts. Fearfully punished and most miserable wretch. Within his breast sit self-tormenting fiends—terror, flaming on his eye her accusing torch—remorse, wringing out his heart's blood—despair, plunging his soul upon fresh ruin, until he cries, in the language of the first murderer—Hold, merciful God! "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Think not, poor eluder of human justice, that crime goes ever unavenged! As thou hast consciousness in thy soul, such shall be the measure and torment of its guilty brand. Judges may excuse thee, and juries bid thee go free; but ah! thou hast an avenger on thy track. Unsleeping and unsated, till the day of atonement, that invisible angel of justice shall haunt thee and drag thee down.

◆

LUXURIES.—Our luxuries and pleasures are the chains that civilization throws around us to attach us to earth. The coarse-minded submit to wear them, forgetting that man was formed for nobler ends, but the elevated and refined cast them off, and aspire to a purer existence.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

FACTS FOR UNJUST CRITICS.

A few scraps from the "Life of Charlotte Bronte," that I would like to see pasted up in editorial offices throughout the length and breadth of the land:

> "She, Miss Bronte, especially disliked the lowering of the standard by which to judge a work of fiction if it proceeded from a feminine pen; and praise mingled with pseudo-gallant allusions to her sex, mortified her far more than actual blame."
>
> "Come what will," she says, "I cannot, when I write, think always of myself, and of what is elegant and charming in feminity; it is not on these terms, or with such ideas, that I ever took pen in hand; and if it is only on these terms my writing will be tolerated, I shall pass away from the public and trouble it no more."
>
> "I wish all reviewers believed me to be a man; they would be more just to me. They will, I know, keep measuring me by some standard of what they deem becoming to my sex; where I am not what they consider graceful, they will condemn me."
>
> "No matter—whether known or unknown—misjudged or the contrary—I am resolved not to write otherwise. *I shall bend as my powers tend.* The two human beings who understood me are gone; I have some who love me yet, and whom I love, without expecting or having a right to expect they shall perfectly understand me. I am satisfied; *but I must have my own way in the matter of writing.*"

Speaking of some attacks on Miss Bronte, her biographer says:

> "Flippancy takes a graver name, when directed against an author by an anonymous writer; we then call it *cowardly insolence.*"

She also says:

> "It is well that the thoughtless critics, who spoke of the sad and gloomy views of life presented by the Brontes in their tales, should know how such words were wrung out of them by the living recollection of the long agony they suffered. It is well, too, that they who have objected to the representation of *coarseness, and shrank from it with repugnance, as if such conception arose out of the writers, should learn, that not from the imagination, not from internal conception—but from the hard cruel facts, pressed down, by an external life upon their very senses, for long months and years together, did they write out what they saw, obeying the stern dictates of their consciences.* They might be mistaken. They might err in writing at all, when their afflictions were so great that they could not write otherwise than, as they did of life. It is possible that it would have been better, to have described good and pleasant people, doing only good and pleasant things, *(in which case they could hardly have written at any time)*: all I say is, that never, I believe, did women possessed of such wonderful gifts exercise them with a fuller feeling of responsibility for their use."

A friend of Miss Bronte says:

> "The world heartily, greedily enjoyed the fruits of Miss Bronte's labors, *and then found out she was much to blame for possessing such faculties.*"

Mrs. Gaskell says:

> "So utterly unconscious was Miss Bronte, of what was by some esteemed "*coarse*" in her writings, that on one occasion, when the conversation turned upon women's writing fiction—she said, in her grave, earnest way, 'I hope God will take away from me whatever power of invention, or expression I may have, before he lets me become blind to the sense of what is fitting, or unfitting to be said.'"

Fanny Fern says:

I would that all who critically finger women's books, would read and ponder these extracts. I would that reviewers had a more fitting sense of their responsibility, in giving their verdicts to the public; permitting themselves to be swayed neither by personal friendship, nor private pique; speaking *honestly*, by all means, but remembering their own sisters, when they would point a flippant, smart article *by disrespectful mention of a lady writer; or by an unmanly, brutal persistence in tearing from her face the mask of incognito-ship, which she has, if she pleases, an undoubted right to wear.* I would that they would speak respectfully of those whose pure, self-denying life, has been through trials and temptations under which *their* strong natures would have succumbed; and who tremblingly await the public issue of days and nights, of single-handed—single-hearted weariness and toil. Not that a woman's book should be praised because it is a woman's, nor on the contrary condemned for that reason. But as you would shrink from seeing a ruffian's hand laid upon your sister's gentle shoulder, deal honestly—but, I pray you, *courteously* with those whose necessities have forced them out from the blessed shelter of the home circle, into jostling contact with rougher natures.

FANNY FERN.

◆

BUTTERFLIES.

The season is coming when we shall see, by the rural wayside and in the fields, the butterflies sporting in the sunlight, on their gossamer wings, as we used to see them in childhood. They are always pleasant to behold, and they are useful monitors, teaching us, as they silently do, to be cheerful and happy. They are associated in the mind with those other emblems of hopefulness as well as happiness, the flowers. And yet these are not *all* of the qualities which the butterfly emblematizes. It calls up thoughts in the thoughtful, which are far from unmingled—thoughts which remind us of the transitoriness of life, as we have it here, and of all things earthly. In the delicate tints on their restless wings, as they flashingly reflect the sunshine, we may read, "*Passing away!*"

But we need not go into the fields, or even the rural highways, to find butterflies. They meet us in the city at every turn, sporting their lives away, with no more important aim than that of their prototypes. They are surely not so useful. Nay, they are not useful at all in the direct sense. It is only as sources of warning that they so become. They teach not hope. They rather, to say the least, *tempt* to despair—despair of the progress of our race in the elements of its true nobility. And were they not, after all, but exceptions to a rule, flitting away their ephemeral existence, and so much of substantial utility and worth, we might *yield* to this temptation. But in view of the earnest lives which the good and the true are leading, we can afford to let these social butterflies sport their brief semblances of real life away, while we look composedly on the scene.

◆

INCONGRUOUS LEGISLATION.

Of all the incongruities of our legislation, no one is more striking than that exemplified in the existence, side by side, on our statute books, of laws forbidding usury, under the severest penalty; and equally deliberately framed laws licensing the worst, the most skinning usurers known in the world,—in the shape of pawn-brokers; permitting them to be sole assessors of property values; and to realize in interest, alone, twenty-five per cent a year—while *legal* interest is less than one-third of that sum. The total of ruin and wretchedness wrought by the shylocks whose dens of destruction are marked by the "Lombardy Balls," would so swallow all the evils that could flow from free trade in money, that the latter would scarce deserve mention. Is it not singular that legislators could, with the same breath almost strike down a lesser usury, and build up a vastly greater—more sordid, crushing and disreputable one? So it seems, and ever must seem, to us. But we have not space at present to discuss the matter as it deserves. We have merely hung out the "Lombardy Balls" to expose at a glance, one of the many incongruities of legislation.

THUGS OR "STRANGLERS."

The Thugs travel along the roads under various assumed characters, in parties varying from ten or twelve to several hundreds. They appear as traders, as pilgrims, as sepoys seeking or returning from service; and sometimes one of their number figures as a Rajah, with all the necessary equipments of tents, carriages, &c., and the rest act the part of his followers. If the gang is numerous, they are divided into separate parties, who follow each other at some distance, or, taking different routes, rendezvous at an appointed place in advance. Their victims are almost always travelers. The most expert members of the gang are employed to collect information, and insinuate themselves into the confidence of the travelers whom they find at the resting places, or overtake on the road. They usually propose to join company for mutual safety; and if the traveler suspects one party, he soon falls in with another, who pretend to enter into his feelings of distrust: a person is sent before to select a proper place for the murder, and scouts are employed to prevent intrusion. The travelers are generally induced to sit down, under pretence of resting themselves, and they are strangled at once on a given signal. The bodies are then burned, after having been mangled to promote dissolution, and to prevent their swelling or causing cracks in the ground. Two Thugs are employed in the murder of each individual, one of whom holds his legs and hands, while the other applies the noose. If a traveler have a dog, it is likewise killed, lest the faithful animal should cause the discovery of the body of its murdered master.

The best way, however, of conveying an adequate idea of the mode in which the murders are committed, will be to select a striking instance of them. This will show the confidence the Thugs repose in the power of concealment which belongs to their system. *There is darkness under the lamp*, says the proverb; and such would appear to be the case, when a whole family with their servants could be murdered under the following circumstances, without any discovery taking place.

"We fell in," said Chutter, a leading Thug, "with the Moonshee and his family at Chuparo, between Nagpore and Jubulpore; and they came on with us to Lucknadown, where we found that some companies of a native regiment under European officers were expected the next morning. It was determined to put them all to death that evening, as the Moonshee seemed likely to keep with the companies. Our encampment was near the village, and the Moonshee's tent was pitched close to us. In the afternoon some of the officers' tents came on in advance, and were pitched on the other side, leaving us between them and the village. The servants were all busily occupied in pitching them. Noor Khan, and his son Sada Kahn, and a few others, went, as soon as it became dark, to the Moonshee's tent, and began to sing and play upon a guitar, as they had been accustomed to do. During this time some of them took up the Moonshee's sword on pretence of wishing to look at it. His wife and children were inside listening to the music. The Jhirnee or signal was given, but at this moment the Moonshee saw his danger, called out murder, and attempted to rush through, but was seized and strangled. His wife hearing him, ran out with the infant in her arms, but was seized by Ghubboo Khan, who strangled her and took the infant. The other daughter was strangled in the tent. The grooms were at the time cleaning their horses, and one of them seeing his danger, ran under the belly of the horse, and called out murder; but he was soon seized and strangled as well as all the rest."

◆

"DO JUSTLY."

Those familiar with the contents of what has been emphatically called "the book of books," will recognize this as part of an exhortation in which it is enjoined to "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly," as what is required of man—and does it not express the whole duty of humanity?

But how are we to understand this exhortation? As teaching the mere *negative* religion so fashionable in our day and generation?—the mere "benevolence," in the literal sense of the word, which is simply *wishing well?* No, farthest from this. It teaches beneficence, rather—that is, good-*doing*, instead of good-*wishing*. "Do" is the word. Activity is the only characteristic which will stand the test. All mere negativeness it ignores as the receiver at the mint ignores the bogus coin.

And this is the great want of our times—ACTIVITY—activity of the soul and its affections, as well as activity of body and mind. But does not the one include the other? Can there, strictly speaking, be healthy activity of one department of our being, so to express it, while the others remain in a state of inertia? No—no. Our being must be cultivated, and be made to "do," *as a whole!* For this purpose was it so "fearfully and wonderfully made."

We mean not to ignore faith. But we have the best of authority for pronouncing that "faith, without *works*, is dead." Let us keep *doing!*

◆

AN UNSISTERLY CHARACTERISTIC.

To the least observant, it must be noticeable that women are least civil, generous and charitable to their own sex. Our admiration of them is too great to permit us to enter into any lengthy exposure of their imperfections in this respect. It will be patent even to them, upon a moment's reflection, that their criticism is sharper and pettier toward one another, than toward the male genus. Betake yourself, reader, to one of our omnibusses or rail cars, and see if, during days and weeks riding, you can discover a lady discommoding herself, or willingly collapsing her hoops to give a sister-woman a seat. See if one ever offers a lap, in ever so crowded a conveyance, to one of her own sex. Oh feminity! let not this unsisterly characteristic be forever a reproach to you. In the eye and heart of man you can only lose by such conduct,

WIT AND HUMOR.

PREPARED FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE, ESQ., OF THE LOUISVILLE JOURNAL.

THE habits of the times work strange revolutions in grammar. Abuses, that once were singular, have become plural. Charity, which was formerly in the dative case, has fallen into the vocative. The verb to live, which was once regular, has become irregular, and the verb to love is declined, not conjugated.

THE Philadelphia Bulletin says of Kentucky that "her eggs are regularly received in the Philadelphia market." We should like to know what wretch is selling Kentucky's eggs. She should be allowed to sit on them, and hatch a brood of young States.

WE have seen an "abscess" defined as a morbid tumor frequently growing above the shoulders and swelling to a considerable size, when it comes to a head, with nothing in it. It can scarcely be considered a *natural* disease however, for nature is said to "abhor a vacuum."

SLANDER, like other poisons, when administered in very heavy doses, is often thrown off by the intended victim, and thus relieves where it was meant to kill. Dirt sometimes acts like fuller's earth, defiling for the moment, but purifying in the end.

Two members of the Ohio Legislature quarrelled a few days ago. One of them called the other a liar, and the latter retorted by throwing a quid of tobacco in the face of the offender. We presume this was meant as the *quid pro quo*.

IT is a common trick of one of the principal American conjurers to make his wife suddenly disappear before the eyes of the spectators. If he could teach to other husbands this trick of making wives vanish, he would have a fair opening for a fortune.

A RHYMER in one of the New York papers, in dwelling upon the features of his lady-love, talks enthusiastically about her "raven *looks*." Either that poet is foully wronged by the type-setters, or he has a queer taste for sweethearts.

A ROUGH-SPOKEN divine, in an argument before his vestry, said of one of his deacons, "I think brother B. is a fool to-night." The deacon calmly replied, "I am not a fool, but, if his reverence has a right to call me brother, I admit I am next akin to one."

A MAN in Wisconsin, who unfortunately had his nose pulled last week, makes bitter complaint of the matter in the Madison paper. He doesn't attempt to show, however, that his nose didn't have "a fair shake."

THE Mormon chief gives notice that he shall carefully guard the principles of his church, on which, he says, "hang all the law and the prophets." We think that he is more disposed to burn the law and pocket the profits.

A CHAP went out into the fields to procure slippery-elm bark. After freely chewing what he supposed to be the genuine article, he became wretchedly sick. "Faith!" said he, "I have barked up the wrong tree."

WE have often thought of a certain class of politicians that it is quite a pity each man of them couldn't be appointed the keeper of somebody's conscience, for they seem to have none of their own to keep.

IT has been remarked as being exceedingly probable, that when David hurled the stone at Goliah, the giant must have been a good deal surprised, as such a thing had never entered his head before.

"IT is a solemn thing to be married," said Aunt Rachael, a solemn spinster, to her niece. "It is a good deal more solemn not to be," said the merry girl.

IF mere partisan politicians are not a filthy set of people, it must be because they throw so much dirt at their neighbors as to have none left for themselves.

A MAN can always be sure of his own good word, and, if he has nobody else's, he usually draws upon his own all the more liberally.

IT is a truth not unworthy of consideration, that those who obstinately refuse to give up abuses will inevitably be called upon to surrender uses.

◆

CURRENT ITEMS.

A PRISONER of state, incarcerated in a dungeon in Piedmont, not long since attempted to escape by taking the place of a deceased fellow-prisoner in the coffin. Removing the corpse, he laid it upon the straw in the corner of the cell and threw his blanket over it, so it should resemble a prisoner asleep, and then, stretching himself in the coffin, shut the lid. The bearers came in, took up the coffin and carried it forth; but unfortunately, as they were crossing the court-yard, the prisoner was seized with a violent fit of coughing. The bearers dropped the coffin and fled with terror, but some of the guards not being so superstitious, hastened to the spot, caught the poor fellow, and carried him back to his dungeon.

OUR Canadian brethren are just now overwhelmed with astonishment and indignation at the disclosures of fraud which the three railway committees, appointed by the Government, are making. Swindles amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars have been perpetrated with reckless freedom, by members of parliament and the stock-jobbers on nearly every "great railway line." Although the number of railways projected is very great, there is still room for another which would be of great utility and convenience, and that is a railroad from the Parliament House to the Penitentiary.

A LADY named Mrs. Sapp, who was sitting at the door of her house, near Canton, Maryland, a short time ago, saw a woman reclining upon the bank of the railroad (which was close by her dwelling), in such a position that the cars, which were heard approaching, would be certain to strike her. Mrs. Sapp ran to alarm the woman, who seemed to be asleep, and caught hold of her just in time to pull her from the track as the cars came up; but unfortunately losing her own balance she fell forward, was struck by the locomotive on the head, and instantly killed.

A man in the western part of this State was recently mulcted in damages to the extent of $250, for publicly repeating as "hearsay" a slanderous statement concerning a young lady, although he gave the names of his informants. This should serve as a warning to parties who are in the habit of circulating injurious stories concerning their neighbors. Of course, none of the readers of the LEDGER would do such an unbecoming thing, but they may save some of their neighbors $250 by communicating the caution to them.

A man leased a house several months since, in Marion county, Ohio, for a year, but after occupying it for a few weeks he moved out. The landlord sued for the rent, but the tenant defended, and put in a plea that the *house was haunted!* The case soon came on for trial, and the defendant won—the jury considering the evidence sufficient to warrant a belief that the house was infested by ghosts. Will mankind ever succeed in expurgating the old leaven of superstition from their nature?

THERE is said to be a lady living in Fall River, Massachusetts, who had the misfortune a few years ago totally to lose her eyesight; but she is yet at the head of her family, and cooks, bakes, irons, sweeps the floors, cleans house, and in fact does all her work, except the washing, without assistance; and it is said her house is the very picture of taste and neatness. There are hundreds of women with unimpaired vision, who do not begin to do this.

A TRAVELER who went roaming up towards the North Pole last winter, and has just got back far enough to meet with a thaw, says, when he was up in the neighborhood of Muoniovara the mercury in the thermometer fell to 79 degrees below zero, and would have fallen further had it not *froze*, and that all the moisture in the air was congealed into an icy mist—which rendered the *cold visible to the naked eye.*

A LITTLE boy at Wilton, Conn., having seen the gardeners and others make piles of rubbish and burn them, recently tried his hand at that business in the barn of a gentleman named Lewis Olmstead, and had the satisfaction of clearing out the whole concern, and of thereby establishing his perfect competency for superintending enterprises of that kind.

A SOLDIER in the 4th Artillery, named Dean, while swimming recently at Cape Sable, Florida, was seized and eaten by a shark. The poor fellow's screams are described as perfectly harrowing; his legs were first bitten off, and he was thus for some minutes conscious of the horrible fate to which he was inevitably doomed.

A SHORT time since a little son of Mr. Thomas Lane of Liberty Falls, Sullivan county, was killed by eating a lot of rat pills which had been spread for vermin upon the shelf of a closet supposed to be beyond the reach of the children of the family.

THE Grass Valley Mining Journal gives an account of no less than twenty-eight miners who have been accidentally killed within a month, while pursuing their avocations, and of ten others who have been shockingly maimed, perhaps for life, within the same period.

The most terrible destitution exists among the inhabitants of Northern Michigan, on the tracts known as the "graduated lands." Many persons have actually perished of starvation.

A CONTRADICTION.

BY ALICE CARY.

I wish the rose were not so red,
The bird more bashful with his glee,—
They join themselves to bliss that I
Shall never in my lifetime see.

I wish the wind would cease to play
Upon the elm-leaves at the door,
The old, sweet tunes—I cannot bear
Ever to hear them any more.

O gift of God's good speech abused!
I do not mean the things I say:
Last year my single plot of flowers
Within the sickle's compass lay;

And when I think how little ground
They needed, and how sagely sweet
They taught me their humility,
Growing no higher than my feet,

I cannot bear to see the spring
Renew again her soft green lease,—
The honeysuckle's scarlet throat
Reminds me of my murdered peace.

* * *

THE WIDOW OF TOLEDO.

A TALE OF

"LOW BIRTH AND IRON FORTUNE."

BY DR. S. P. BRONSON.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York

CHAPTER XV.

TOO LATE!

The widow was in a reverie; that is to say, having closed her doors, for the time being, on all visitors, she was meditating, with an uneasy brow, upon three incidents, namely—the sudden flight of the woodman, the resignation of the secretary, and the mysterious disappearance of the waiting-woman. The first and second she imputed to the same cause, though without clearly comprehending what that cause was; but the third puzzled and annoyed her. And after getting her mind into a state of almost inextricable confusion, in endeavoring to unravel the knotty problem, she concluded to give it up in despair, and try what could be gleaned from investigation.

But to pursue the inquiries which were in her mind in her own person, would compromise her dignity. This must be thought of, and the lady *did* think of it, and for a brief hour was posed. She had none to whom she could give her confidence, and hence was thrown upon her own resources; that is to say, upon her wits.

When it is remembered that the lady was a widow—a word which, be it understood, signifies in the first place a woman; in the second place, a woman with three hundred times the courage, the shrewdness and the readiness to take advantage of circumstances, that is possessed by a maid; and in the third place, a woman with unlimited confidence in herself and in experimental knowledge of the ease with which men are captured by women that understand how to wield Cupid's lasso; when it is remembered, we say, that the lady was a widow, that she was in love, and had her being stirred up by the acute promptings of jealousy, the reader will not be surprised to learn that on being thrown upon her own resources, she was not long in forming her plans or in deciding upon her course of action. Now, when in addition to this, it is also remembered that, besides having all the wit and experience of a widow, Donna Isabel de la Montera was of a race always noted for their coolness, intelligence and unshrinking courage, the reader will agree with us that there was no matter of astonishment at all in the fact that when night came and the porter was temporarily absent from his post, the hall door was silently swung back, and a young lady in the disguise of a doctor's student passed into the street, and made her way, with an air of careless indifference, through the narrow, dimly-lighted streets to the inn of the Three Poor Travelers, which she entered with the same easy gait, and seating herself at a small corner table, boldly called for a tankard of Rhenish.

The room was neither large nor small, and yet it had six small tables ranged on either side, most of which were occupied by from one to half a dozen young roysterers, who then as now threw out jest and gossip and senseless noise in about the proportion that they imbibed the stimulus of the cup.

The Three Poor Travelers was situated a few doors from the corner of a modest street running from the plaza, or great square, and was regarded as a respectable second-rate inn. It was patronized chiefly by peaceable, orderly persons, who loved a quiet drink in a quiet way, but who, nevertheless, when under the influence of wine, occasionally spoke, or rather chattered, sufficiently above their breaths to be heard by all around them. This, however, was no truer of the frequenters of the Three Poor Travelers than of the quiet patrons of similar places in our own day. Thence it was that the arrival of the young student created no more attention than did that of others who entered afterwards, or the departure now and then of one or more of those who, having finished their tankards, retired either for a promenade on the plaza or for their homes.

The medical student, or rather the widow, as the reader will doubtless readily understand, did not visit the Three Poor Travelers for the purpose of taking a quiet drink; and though, for the hour or two that she remained there, she occasionally lifted the vessel to her lips, it was observed by a waiter, after her departure, that the measure was as full as when it was first placed upon the table; a fact which caused that worthy to wonder not a little at the good drinking taste of the student, for the wine was pure and of a quality to sustain the character of the Three Poor Travelers, which was noted in a small way for the excellence of its liquors. But this apart.

The widow had scarcely seated herself at the little corner table we have mentioned, when she experienced the truth of the proverb, that they who would learn the news at home must go abroad.

"It is as I have had the honor to inform you, senors," said a noisy individual to his companions, a party of four at an adjoining table. "The marquis, with all his skill, was no more than a child before him. Leon pierced him in five places, more to teach Sorbano his utter impotence than anything else, and finally gave him a finisher in the left breast that, according to the surgeon, must have been intended as a mercy-stroke; for while the puncture begins on a direct line with the heart, it suddenly diverges downward and grazes the edge, as though Leon had compassionately changed his mind, and concluded simply to punish and not to kill his antagonist."

"Very likely," observed another; "for the secretary is naturally of a magnanimous turn."

The widow pricked up her ears.

"There is no use of arguing the matter," said a third. "Leon is not only the first swordsman of the gymnasium, but of Toledo. That man's life is not worth a pin's fee who seriously crosses blades with him. I myself have seen him disarm five good foil-players in succession."

"But what was the cause of their quarrel?" asked the fourth.

"Cause enough," answered the last speaker. "Did not the marquis purposely insult him on Tuesday at the gymnasium?"

"Call him an upstart, or something of that sort," suggested the second.

"Exactly," continued the third. "And was it not known to everybody in Toledo that they were to fight on the following morning?"

"I am aware of all that," said the fourth, impatiently. "But what was the cause of the insult? What had Leon said or done?"

"Ah!" returned the other, laughingly, applying his tankard to his lips, "now that you are going into the metaphysics of the case, I must decline answering."

"Allow me to enlighten you," pompously remarked the first, with the air of a man who knew all about it. "A friend who was present when the marquis was brought home, states that de Percy, who witnessed the combat, informed the elder Sorbano that it was unprovoked by Leon, who, both at the gymnasium and when on the ground, demanded an explanation of the reason, and was scornfully refused; and that it was probably owing to the ungenerousness of this refusal that Leon punished the marquis as he did. Had the latter acted more like a gentleman, he would have been let off comparatively uninjured."

"I don't see that that answers my question!" said the fourth.

"Then you had better consult the marquis himself," returned the other, somewhat chagrined, "for if the conqueror, the secretary, did not know why the quarrel was forced upon him, it is not likely that we should."

"Was it forced upon him?"

THE WIDOW OF TOLEDO (IN THE GARB OF A CAVALIER,) CAPTURED BY BANDITTI.

"The count so informed the elder Sorbano."

"What does *he* know about it?"

"Who, the count?"

"The same."

"He appears to be aware of all the details, from the commencement to the end."

"So did *you*, but now; and yet when you are pinned to the point, you are acquainted only with so much of the general facts as is familiar to every body!"

"I must see this Count de Percy!" muttered the widow, to herself.

"It was rumored here this afternoon," said the landlord, who feared an outbreak, quietly approaching the party, "that a certain lady, well known for her great wealth, is mixed up in this affair."

The widow felt a tingling in her veins and a blushing hotness in her cheeks, to hide which she raised her tankard to her lips, but, as usual, was careful not to drink.

"What lady?" demanded the four, in a breath.

"I am not at liberty to mention the name," answered the host; "particularly as I am not certain of the amount of truth that may be in the statement; but it is said—mind, I only give the latest report—it is said that the marquis had resolved that no one but himself should wed this lady, upon whom he had made no impression, and who of late has apparently been inclining towards the secretary—a fact which alarmed the jealous fears of the marquis, who determined to insult and call him out, for the purpose of removing in him a formidable obstacle to his own eventual success."

The widow, this time, was sensible of a burning heat, not only in her cheeks but up to the crown of her head.

"This, after all, can only be a mere conjecture," said the third, who appeared to be equally compounded of inordinanate obstinacy and shrewdness; "for how could a matter so purely private leak out. The marquis, who is notorious for his pride, in which he wraps himself as in a cloak, would not be likely to blab upon himself, and thus be the herald of his own shame!"

"Pardon me, senor," said the host, looking down with steady firmness upon the speaker, whose bullying spirit was to him as transparent as water, "but it *is* likely!"

"Bah!" cried the other with affected contempt.

The innkeeper quietly laid his hand upon the young bully's shoulder, as he said—

"You form your conclusions too hastily, my friend. Shallow minds invariably do so. You should first hear to the end, and then judge!"

The young man flushed, and appeared for an instant as if disposed to resent the remark; but the hand upon his shoulder, and the calm, steadfast gaze of its owner unnerved him, and he colored and dropped his eyes like one conscious that he has been detected and exposed.

It was plain to all at the table that he felt that he was understood, and that he would never again attempt to browbeat anybody in their presence.

The pompous gentleman, who had previously been cowed, instantly began to feel his superiority rising again.

"What are the facts, landlord?" he asked, brushing up his hair.

"As I have related them," said the innkeeper, who, conscious that he had sufficiently humiliated the bully, now withdrew his hand from that individual's shoulder.

"But how did they get out?"

"Through the ravings, before his attendants, of the marquis himself, who for the last two days has been in a high fever."

"Ah! thank you; that accounts for it. You see, gentlemen, I was not far out of the way! Is the marquis likely to re-disturb our friend the secretary think you, landlord?"

"Not in this world," returned the host. "It is said—I only give you the report—that in case he should recover, which is doubtful, the wound in each shoulder will render his arms utterly useless!"

There being no longer any danger of a disturbance, the landlord now moved away, and left the party to themselves. On reaching the bar and looking round to see if the guests were all at ease, he observed the doctor's student, or rather the widow, silently beckoning him to approach. Comprehending that he was to do this without attracting attention, he gradually moved in that direction, as if intent upon no particular object. On reaching the table he quietly sat down, and looking towards the bar, like a true inn-keeper, for the double purpose of keeping an eye upon the waiters and the company, and of giving the student an opportunity to speak without restraint, he inquired, in a low tone, "the senor's wish?"

The buzzing chatter of the guests rendered the conversation that followed inaudible to all but the parties themselves.

"Can you inform me, host," said the student, in a low voice, which, notwithstanding its owner's effort to disguise it, the innkeeper at once recognized as that of a woman, "whether you have a female lodger?"

"No female lodgers at present," he answered, without turning or permitting it to appear that he suspected the sex of the questioner.

"Have you had any recently?"

"Not for many months."

A faint sigh of relief escaped from the widow.

"Is the secretary of whom you were but now speaking one of your guests?"

"Not that I am aware of. I have not the honor of his acquaintance. I do not know that I ever saw him. Yet stay," added the innkeeper, as a thought crossed him. "Is he in the neighborhood of twenty-five—handsome—blending in his deportment the mildness of a priest with the calm dignity of a prince?"

"You have described him," said the widow, stifling a sigh.

"This woman is some poor creature whom the young man has infatuated!" muttered the host. "Was *he* Leon, the famed swordsman?"

"Himself. Is he here?"

"He was here," said the innkeeper, slowly, and without looking around at his interrogator.

"*Was!*" repeated the widow, her cheek paling to the hue of marble.

"He went away with a boy-squire, whom I had the honor of introducing to his service, two days ago," was the reply.

"Whither?"

The innkeeper noticed that this word was pronounced in the dry, husky tone of one in mingled surprise and pain.

"Can this be the widow, of whom I heard today?" he mentally inquired. "To Madrid," he said, sinking his voice.

He felt the small table, on which his left arm rested, quiver.

"It *is* the widow!" he muttered. "Something has occurred to sunder their relations, and she is in agony. Poor soul! I pity her!"

"Who was the boy that you spoke of, senor?" asked the lady, with an effort.

"A modest country lad, who had come to the city on the evening before the young man's departure, in quest of service. The poor creature must be in great suffering" he added to himself, "for she is trembling again."

"His name?"

"The boy's? Paul."

"His age?"

"I should suppose some sixteen or eighteen, or so. She cannot be jealous of the lad?" he mentally exclaimed.

"Tall or short?"

"Neither; of middling height."

"Stout or slender?"

"Inclining rather to the latter."

"I pray you, senor, to describe him."

"Right willingly. He was a clean, handsome youth, with a large, modest eye; a clear, high, broad brow, on whose smooth surface thought contested the palm with artless purity; a Grecian nose, whose delicately curved nostril would have served and delighted a sculptor ambitious of distinction in locating passion's graduating index; a mild yet exquisitely chiseled mouth, on which, if I were a woman, I could hang till my arm was worn with kissing; and a bold yet softly rounded chin, on which the dawn of early manhood had not yet begun to grow. His voice had that lute-toned fullness which falls upon the ear like the sound of sea waves in melting summer, captivating every sense and subduing it into gushing joy. Never before heard I such a voice in man or woman. The sweetness of the lark's was harsh in comparison, and I felt that I could listen to it for ever. I was preparing for the business of the day when, from his room, he came bounding in to tell me his story and solicit my influence in procuring him hire under the senor he had seen the evening before in the dining room; and, on my word, as I am a Christian man, I was perforce compelled to relinquish what I had in hand and fold my arms and listen, entranced by the melody that issued from his lips."

"Had his voice a like effect upon the secretary?" asked the widow, who felt her heart growing hard.

"You shall hear. Finding at length that my affairs were suffering while I listened, I, whose every sense had banqueted on the ravishment of his tones, consented to take him up to the senor whom he so desired to serve. The latter gave him a courteous but a cold reception. But I left him, confident that his voice and artless manner would take the senor captive as they had me. Nor did I err. Ere an hour, two firmer or more loving friends dwelt not in Toledo, and the lad came down to tell me of his good fortune and sobbing at his success."

The innkeeper felt the table quivering again, and this time as though the lady was shivering with a chill.

"Paul, I think you called him?" she said, in a voice so hollow and unlike her own that it surprised herself.

"Paul," answered the host, neither turning nor exhibiting any sign that he was conscious of whom he was conversing with.

"How was he garbed?"

"As became so handsome a country lad: in a small, flat, green velvet hat, with a buckle, but no plume; a close-fitting tunic of the same pleasant color, slashed on the inner side of the arm with white cambric; light hose, revealing a leg whose matchless symmetry and beauty would have filled a painter or carver with rapture: and russet shoes that would have answered for almost any city child of ten. You should have seen him as, with his first sword dangling from his side, he vaulted at one bound upon his horse, and catching up the rein, dashed off, hopefully beside his master, for Madrid; you would have said, as I did, and as did all who beheld him in the saddle, that a comelier lad never put foot in stirrup nor challenged admiration for his grace!"

"Thank you," said the widow, rising. "Please accompany me to the door. The wine I fear has stolen up into my head. To Madrid, you said?"

"Madrid, senor.

"Two days since?"

"And some few hours over. They started at the close of the siesta."

"Many, many thanks. But we are at the door, and I feel better—better than I can express. Many thanks again, senor. Adieu!"

"Good night!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MAN WHO HAD LOST HIS BULL-DOGS.

A man of fifty-five or thereabouts was sitting before a desk in a room, lined on all sides with rosewood shelves, burdened with large parchment-bound volumes, whose Latin titles were understood by none of the household except their owner, who, with the carefulness of a prudent man, had caused the initials of his name to be imprinted near the bottom of the back of each, thus—"J. M.," Juan Mendoza, or, as he was designated in the letters patent of his office, Don Juan de Mendoza, Minister of Justice for the province of Toledo to his Most Gracious Catholic Majesty, Charles the Fourth, King of Spain—a title which the voice of the public abbreviated to Don Mendoza, Minister of Justice, which was still further curtailed in common conversation to the Minister of Justice, which was at once brief, expressive, and reducing the man to the office, which was very different from the senor himself, who, as the reader has learned from his excellency the Viceroy and his friend the superintendent of the treasury, was ambitious of reducing the office to the man, and also rising above it.

As we have said, this man was sitting before his desk, in his library, and glancing now at a sheet of parchment which was partially filled up with words, to which he occasionally added others, and then, with an absent, perplexed air, through the window, which looked out upon a moderately sized garden tastefully laid out in pebble walks, fringed with variegated flowers, whose delicious perfumes mingled with those which issued from lemon, orange, pomegranate, date, olive and almond trees, and bathed the mansion of the minister of justice in an atmosphere of odor

This sweet odor, which one would naturally suppose would have a soothing and refining influence upon those who inhaled it, had little or none on the minister's family; certainly not upon the minister himself, who was as bold and irascible as a Turk, nor upon his five sons, who, from childhood, had always been noted for their impudence, their imperiousness, their presumption and pugnacity—qualities which made them at once the terror and pest of the neighborhood, and which had eventually resulted in sending them one after another down to their family vault much sooner than they probably would have gone if they had been born under a less intemperate star: a fact which should not have been without its moral to their sire, upon whom, however, it had had no other effect than to make him more haughty, more crafty, and more pugnacious than ever. And whereas during the lifetime of his sons the neighbors spoke of him as the snarling sire of the five bull-pups, they, since the death of the youngest, who, as we have seen, fell by the hand of the Marquis de Sorbano, changed the appellation to the snapping bull-dog, which, as the reader will doubtless concede, was not so dignified as expressive. Nor was this soubriquet without a certain degree of truthful meaning; for while the minister invariably snapped at all who crossed his path, he not unfrequently took a nice bit from their persons, or rather their purses, to inspire them with a proper respect for his teeth—that is to say his position as minister of justice, for which they thenceforth had a most wholesome awe. But there was also a deeper significance to his nick-name, in that he clung with dogged tenacity to both his aspirations and his hates. As he never pardoned any who had been so unfortunate as to incur his enmity, so he never relinquished an ambition that had once taken possession of his thoughts. For instance, his eye had long been fixed upon the Viceroy's chair, in which, with his customary confidence in himself, he expected to sit; and though after the lapse of twelve years he was no nearer to the object of his desire than at first, he quietly muttered, "Patience, the future is still before us!" and continued to plot, to work, and to look forward to success, as steadily and stealthily as before.

But on the occasion referred to in the opening of this chapter, a new idea was working in his mind and interrupting the progress of a letter which he was inditing to Ramirez, the prime minister, whose friendship he, in view of making that personage useful, had carefully been cultivating ever since the birth of his aspiration for the Vice-regal chair. This idea was at the same time a regret. It was in reference to the loss of the five bull-pups, whose ferocious audacity had formerly made him feel strong and equal to any enterprise which might issue from his own subtle brain. He missed them, now; not as a father misses the loved ones that once made home an Eden, but as a marauding chief feels the loss of his band, whose slaughter in the last foray has left him without the means of carrying terror to the hearths of his enemies, and reduced him to the necessity of relying wholly upon his individual strength.

The minister missed his sons the more keenly, inasmuch as, understanding his game, they played into his hand, and made his interest their own. They were his spies, when he needed such; they pried out such information as was essential to his purpose; they fought his battles; they rode his journeys; they carried his letters to the prime minister; they overawed and neutralized the intrigues of his enemies; they were, in fine, his strength and the performers of his will.

They *were!* What a word to a man who, like the minister of justice, sees the one great dream of his life jeoparded because he can no longer say of his instruments, "they ARE!"

Without having learned it from any human tongue, Don Mendoza was conscious that the object of his ambition was at length known to the party most interested in its defeat, namely—the Viceroy. He had not heard it, nor gathered it from any chain of circumstances that had come to his ear or fallen under his observation. But he was nevertheless as firmly convinced of the fact as though it had been told him by the Viceroy himself. It had entered his mind like a veritable intuition, and hung up its hat and taken a chair there like a lodger, that will not and cannot be drawn out; and he saw the necessity of prompt thought and prompter action.

But in this lay the key to the uneasiness with which he looked up from the half-filled parchment sheet before him, and gazed out upon the trees in the garden, as if expecting to behold some object leap from their branches to his rescue. For till the death of the last of the five pups, he had been accustomed to do only the thinking. And now action was called for; but who was to perform it? The letter he was inditing needed to be taken to the prime minister without delay—whom had he to take it? Himself? He shook his head at the bare thought. The business of his office would become inextricably involved; a great host of petty combiuations formed for the purpose of profit—and the minister loved money—would seriously suffer; and he had enemies who would like nothing better than to have him absent for a short time from his post. Besides, the sedentary habits of a whole manhood had done their work upon him, and were visible in his withered legs and shrunken arms. The rapier which he usually wore at his side, hung there more for show than use. It is true that he had in his breast courage enough for twenty men; but what is courage without strength, a rapier without the ability to handle it? Added to this, a journey to Madrid was not without its perils. There were brigands in the mountains, and murdered travelers found daily in the passes. If he were young again, these dangers would not deter him; but age is prudent, and not over-fond of going in the way of murdered travelers.

But something must be done, and quickly. He had important information for the prime minister concerning the latter's ancient enemy, Don Garcia De Vega, information which would gratify that personage, and make him a faster friend than ever to the sender, whom he already regarded with high favor. And the prime minister, be it remembered, was the real king—the power behind the throne that moved it in whatever direction his humor or his wisdom willed.

But these were not Don de Mendoza's only troubles. Of late an insect had buzzed around him and succeeded in puncturing him with its mosquito-like bill in a great many tender places. This insect had two legs, was five feet ten inches in height, and appeared to take a malicious delight in stinging him. On his way to and from court, the minister could not turn around without beholding this insect at his heels. Wherever he went this insect appeared to follow. While privately conversing one night with a client on the plaza relative to a suit which was shortly to come up before the minister for final adjudication, he was startled, as the conference drew to a close, at beholding a human form sitting behind a contiguous tree, with its head bowed in drunken slumber upon its breast. The minister and the client looked at one another in mingled astonishment and alarm. They comprehended that in case the man's sleep should be unreal, their conversation which would not bear the light, had been overheard.

"Shall I stab him, my lord?" asked the client in a whisper.

"Wait!" said the minister.

And he stooped down to smell the man's breath, which threw out the rank exhalation that proceeds from one sleeping off a debauch.

"Well, my lord?" inquired the client, whose hand was upon his dagger.

"Let him pass," said the minister. "There is no danger."

And the pair turned from the spot.

But they had scarcely quitted the plaza when it occurred to the minister that he had seen the sleeper's features before; and on further reflection, he remembered that they were those of the insect. On communicating this fact to the client, the latter suggested the propriety of immediately retracing their steps, and despatching him. The minister assented, and they returned to the plaza. But on reaching the tree, they started and exchanged a glance of uneasiness.

"The man was no longer there!

"A spy!" suggested the client.

"But *whose?*" said the minister.

"*That* is the point!" said the client.

And they left the plaza with gloomy brows.

An evening or two later, while meditating in his study, the minister chancing to look through the window, again, to his astonishment, beheld the insect nestling in the branch of an orange tree, and attentively observing him. Rushing indignantly out, and calling to the servants, whom he headed, he sought in vain for the spy who had hastily decamped, leaving behind him a small piece of parchment, which the porter picked up from the foot of the orange-tree and handed to his master, who, in returning to his study, read, in scrawling letters, "I *am after you!*"

This incident, it will be easily conceived, gave a new turn to the minister's reflections, and sent him to his couch with a dreamy eye.

The next evening, while walking in the plaza in search of a client with whom he had an appointment, and to whom he wished to deliver a letter of secret instructions in reference to procuring false witnesses, he suddenly observed the latter conversing with an abbe. He passed and made a sign to catch the client's eye. It was unsuccessful; but on putting his hand into his pocket for the letter, he discovered to his dismay that it was gone!

"The insect!" he muttered; his intuition telling him who was the thief.

To add to his uneasiness, he, the following morning, found on the floor of his study a note which had evidently been thrown in at the window. It was written in the same hand as that found by the porter, and contained the following: "*I* HAVE *you!*"

The minister sighed for the five pups, either of whom would have made short work with this impudent mosquito.

But was he a government or a private spy? Was he in the interest of some official interested in his ruin, or in that of some infuriated sufferer who was seeking vengeance for some unrighteous decree? In either case, it was time for the minister to be up and doing, and on his guard.

All this floated through the mind of the minister, and occasioned the perplexity that marked his manner as he indicted the letter to the prime minister. But everything has an end in time, and the epistle finally reached its completion, and lay before its writer in a green velvet envelope, crossed with red tape, which was fastened to the cloth every here and there with a seal of crimson wax. Nothing now was wanting but a messenger to bear it to its destination. But where should he look for this messenger, who, in view of the importance of the letter and the dangers of the journey, ought to be at once cunning, trusty and brave? While considering this important question, a servant announced a client in the reception room. A few minutes sufficed for the business of the visitor, after dismissing whom the minister returned to the study—to resume his cogitations, when a new surprise startled his watery blood, and sent it leaping through his veins like molten lead.

The letter to the prime minister was gone!

"The insect—the insect!" he muttered, and sunk trembling with rage and terror into his chair.

There was now no further time for thought, faltering or uneasiness. That letter in the hands of an enemy would betray all his hopes and plans; that letter would brand him for an aspiring spy, and bring him into general execration and contempt. Only one course was left to him, namely: to anticipate the action of his enemies by instantly taking horse for Madrid. This, though not without a struggle, he finally concluded to do; and leaving word for visitors that he had been unexpectedly called away a few days, he, at daybreak of the following morning, clambered into the saddle.

As he emerged into the highroad running through the mountains, he beheld before him, riding at an easy pace, a careless, lounging form illy dressed in a suit of greasy, threadbare gray, and mounted on a lean, homely mule, whose more than half-starved air left but little room to doubt that his owner would ere long be compelled to continue his journey on foot, or else finish it on the back of another steed.

"Ho, friend!" patronizingly cried the minister, who was glad of any company through the mountains, "you have but a sorry jade under you! If you have far to go, methinks you had done better to provide yourself with a sounder beast!"

"Ah! senor," said Pequilo, for it was he, with an air of good-natured simplicity, "you know the proverb, 'Who is too honest, must needs go slim.' Poor Peter, here, is an innocent creature, and has had only hard fare all his days. When he and another are fed together at the same trough, he hasn't nerve enough to insist upon his own share. The consequence is, he, more than half the time, has to dine upon the air."

"That being the case," said the minister, "why don't you have him fed at a separate stall?"

"Ah! senor, you know the proverb, 'Beggars musn't be choosers.' But poor Peter knows his master's position, and conducts himself accordingly. He don't look for things above his condition. And still he has his yearnings, too, poor fellow! I've seen him eye a cabbage with an expression that would have drawn feeling from a stone; and then, senor, as though the sight was more than he could bear, he would turn his head another way, and presently big tears would gather in his large black orbs, and his chest would heave, for all the world like a betrayed and deserted woman's, when she sees what is before her."

"You of course treat him to a little luxury, now and then?" said the minister, congratulating himself upon having stumbled upon so entertaining a companion, and but little dreaming that he and the insect were the same person.

"Ah! senor, you know the proverb, 'Now and then is never to poor folks.' It would be waking an appetite that ought to slumber to give him more than his usual fare. When one loves his mule, he only feeds him what he can always afford to give, and no more. To do otherwise, would be cruel; for it would be raising expectations that perhaps might never be gratified."

"Have you far to go?" asked the minister.

"Ah! senor, you know the proverb. 'Who can tell where his journey will terminate?' If I like the road, I may pursue it to the end; if not, I probably shall turn off into some other. It makes but little difference which road I travel so long as I reach my destination."

"What do you follow for a living?" inquired the minister, perceiving that he had to do with one who was not so simple as he seemed.

"Nothing—anything—everything!"

"Nothing—anything—everything!" repeated the minister. "How can that be?"

"Thus," said the mule-driver, with a merry laugh, "I follow nothing, because who goes after nothing gets to nothing—and I have been to *that* these thirty years. I follow anything, because who pursues anything receives anything (which is next to nothing,) for his pains—and that is all I get. I follow everything, because who goes after everything comes home with nothing—and that is all I bring home."

"Have you no special business?" said the minister, determined to see what would come of driving the fellow into a corner.

"Yes, senor, to drive Peter and give him half a peck of bran a day, which I have faithfully done these sixteen years."

"I see you are a wit!" observed the minister, smiling at the ease with which the interrogatory was parried.

"I think it likely, senor; for I've heard it said wits never amount to much, which, I am sure, is the case with me."

"Are you married?"

"Who, I?" laughed the man in gray. "If I get a kiss now and then from a pretty servant-maid, it is as near as I hope to ever get to matrimony. Married men are grave, dismal fellows, and when walking with their wives remind me of the chief mourners at a funeral. They have a sneaking gait, like persons ashamed of themselves. They laugh dolefully, as though their hearts were not in it; and, under the tutelage of their wives, become shy, mean, avaricious, and respectable. We have many such in our village; and I never see one without thinking, 'There's a fine young man spoiled.'"

"Where did you say your village is?"

"A great way from here, senor."

"East or west?"

"Neither?"

"North, then?"

"No."

"O, I see. South?"

"Nor north nor south."

"How can that be? It must be one of the four?"

"What if it be north by west?"

"I understand. It lies in that direction?"

"What direction, senor?"

"North by west."

"I have not said so, senor."

"Most certainly you did."

"Most certainly I did not. I simply said, *what* if it be north by west. But that by no means intimates that it *does* lie there. It simply asks a question."

"My young friend, you are too smart!" observed the disappointed minister. "You will hurt yourself some day!"

"Ah! senor, you know the proverb, 'Who has nothing can lose nothing!' To which let me add, 'Who hurts only himself, does but little harm.' By the way, is your honor well armed? This road, they say, hath in it those who have no respect for aught except well-aimed bullets and boldly handled steel. Myself have seen broken-headed men, with not a drop of life left in them, lying stark and stiff on the wayside."

"Have you any fears of these gentry?" demanded the minister.

"I, senor," returned the man in gray, laughingly. "No one would think, looking at my mule and its sorrily dressed owner, that I had anything to lose!"

De Mendoza rode on awhile thoughtfully. The possibility of being robbed and left upon the road was not very pleasant. Glancing at length at the man in gray, he smilingly inquired—

"How would you like to exchange clothes, friend?"

"Ah! senor, I couldn't think of it," answered Pequilo, whose ready wit enabled him to understand what was in the other's mind. "My greasy suit is my best friend. It is, as I may say, a safe protection from land's end to land's end. With it I can travel through the most dangerous passes without fear. It preserves me alike from imposition by inn-keepers, and violence by robbers. It enables me also to dispense with sword and petronel; for what brigand would think it worth while to cry 'stand' to the owner of such a pitiful doublet. Exchange garments, senor! As well ask a soldier marching to battle to sell his armor?"

"Do you think we are in so great danger, then?"

"*We*—no; for I and Peter are safe. We are, so to speak, too insignificant to attract attention. But with you and your gallant Andalusian, who carries himself as though he bore a prince, it is a different matter."

The minister of justice began to wish himself at home again.

"But," continued the man in gray, with a gay leer, which, however, by no means served to reassure his auditor, "but you have one consolation, senor. The robbers never kill good horses."

"No?"

"No, senor. Good steeds are valuable; but their riders—ah! they do not hold *them* in such repute. A bullet through the head, a knife in the side, and a cold bed among the rocks are good enough for them!"

Great drops of sweat appeared upon the forehead of the minister, who eyed the lean, ill-favored mule, and the greasy doublet of its careless owner with hungry desire—or perhaps we should say, with gnawing envy.

But neither the drops of sweat, nor the yearning glance at Peter, were lost upon the man in gray, who smiled in a manner peculiar to himself, and mentally promised St. Catherine six wax candles per week for a certain term in case she should come to his assistance in some matter he had in hand—in which promise the word 'bargain' had a fair degree of prominence.

"I have a fancy, friend," said the minister as they struck into the mountains, "that I should like to take your beast under my protection so long as we continue together."

"I feel a nibble!" muttered the man in gray. "St. Catherine has concluded to take up my offer. She wants the six wax candles!" Then turning to the minister, he laughingly inquired, "For what purpose, senor? He is in no danger from the robbers."

"I have a feeling for the poor creature," said the minister; "and while he is in company with my Andalusian, I should like to see him enjoy himself. Let us therefore exchange for the nonce. I'll take care that the ostlers on the way shall treat him to plenty and to the best. For once in his life he shall know what it is to live like the horse of a hidalgo."

"He wants to make a good bargain out of me!" muttered Pequilo, with a quiet chuckle. "He takes me for a flat! Good! so much the better for me! Ah! senor," he said aloud, with an air of great simplicity, "you have a generous heart!"

"You will exchange, then!"

"No, senor. It would not do. Your proposed kindness would be the ruin of poor Peter and me!"

"I do not understand you," said the minister.

"Ah! senor, you know the proverb, 'Who would have his horse content with oats, must not let him smell corn.' If I should allow Peter to feed two or three days like a gentleman's beast, he would look to be so treated ever after, and then trouble would begin. He would turn up his nose in disdain at his old fare, and every time he saw or smelt cabbages, turnips or lettuce, he would make for them straight, whereupon the owner would very properly call upon me for damages, which I of course could not pay: and then away I should go to prison and my horse to vendue. No, no—senor; your proposed kindness would not do! But," quietly reining in the mule, and pointing to a rock on the roadside, "do you see that boulder?"

The minister nodded.

"A month ago, I saw two travelers lying there, with their throats slit from ear to ear. Shall we dismount and examine the color of the earth?"

"Time is precious," replied the minister, turning pale in spite of himself.

"We are now," continued Pequilo, chuckling at the success of his invention, "entering on what is termed hereabouts, 'the brigands' range,' which extends miles on miles away. I mention it, senor, that you may have your petronel ready; for you are likely to be attacked at any moment. As for me, with Peter and this greasy, threadbare doublet, I can sing and loll along as safely as though escorted by a thousand men-at-arms. But what are those dark objects ahead?"

The minister shaded his eyes from the sun, and looking forward beheld what appeared to be a small troup; but whether they were approaching or the contrary, he could not tell.

"What do you take them for, friend?" he asked of the man in gray.

"I will tell you presently, senor," was the reply. "But if you are wise, you will drop a bullet into your petronel and look well to your flint."

"Let us halt a moment," said the minister, reining in. "It is important to a friend that I reach Madrid safely and with speed. What say you to an even barter of your mule for my Andalusian?"

"St. Catherine is determined to have the candles!" said Pequilo, to himself. "Ah! senor," he returned aloud, "you know the proverb, 'Who sells his mule, sells his houses and lands.' Peter is my only dependence Though his looks are against him, there's not his like in Spain for reliableness and endurance; and for speed, I'll wager him against any horse not of Arab blood, that ever champed bit or neighed defiance to any of his kind. I am a poor courier with two aged, helpless parents and a blind brother, who have me alone to look to for bread. Were I to sell Peter, they would suffer!"

"But you have a better in the Andalusian?"

"Ah! senor, you forget how little Peter costs to keep. Your honor may remember that I told you his chief diet is the air; whereas the Andalusian, who has doubtless been accustomed to three good meals per day, and—what's that?"

"What?" cried the minister, looking around.

"Methought I saw a head peering from behind yon cypress," said the man in gray, pointing to a tree on the rocks above them. "We had better push on. Have your petronel in your hand."

The minister hastily unslung from his shoulder a small carabine, the stock of which was richly ornamented with inlaid silver, and placed it before him in the pommel of his saddle-bow.

"You were saying, friend—" he observed, after a few moments, and looking up at the same in the direction of the cypress.

"I was saying, senor, that to feed the Andalusian would take at least one pistole a day, which is more than I earn. And surely your honor would not be so unreasonable as to ask me to run in debt, to work for nothing, and leave my poor old parents and blind helpless brother to starve!"

"But do you not understand that the Andalusian will bring you the price of a dozen mules?"

"Certainly, senor. I cannot be blind to that; for he is a gallant beast, and once in market would command a gallant sum. But your honor forgets one thing!"

"What is that, friend?"

"That we are not in the market, but in 'the brigands' range!'"

"Which means——"

"That if he ever gets out of the mountains, senor, it will be only by a miracle!"

The minister was dumb; and the travelers rode on for a time in silence.

"We are gradually nearing the party ahead of us, your honor!" remarked the man in gray, at length.

"Can you make out their number?" asked the minister, absently.

"Distinctly, senor. There are but two."

"Let us spur up and overtake them. The stronger we are, the less likely we are to be attacked."

"Your honor may," said the man in gray, stroking his moustache with a wary air. "But as for me, I—I have been on this road before!"

"What do you mean, friend?"

"That the brigand chiefs have a trick of slipping into their saddles with their lieutenants, and allowing thoughtless travelers to come up with them!" returned Pequilo, significantly. "If your honor will please to observe, the outlines of the parties before are constantly becoming more and more distinct!"

"Halt!" said the minister. "For the reason I have already given, I would like your mule and garments. What must I pay you in addition?"

"I would rather not entertain the proposition, your honor," answered Pequilo, with affected uneasiness. "I should not wish to take a step which would leave my poor old parents and my blind brother without a provider. Besides, senor, I have not confessed me in a month, and therefore am not ready to die!"

"I will give you fifty pistoles for the exchange!"

"Would fifty pistoles pay for a bullet in your honor's head?"

"Seventy-five—a hundred!"

"Pardon me, your honor. It pains me to refuse so high and generous a gentleman. But life is sweet, and then my poor parents and blind brother—what would become of them?"

"I will protect them. I give you my word!"

"But a hundred pistoles, your honor, would hardly recompense a man for going to purgatory thirty years before his time."

"Thirty years?"

"Thirty years, your honor. My father is sixty, and I am likely to live as long as he."

"Two hundred—two hundred and fifty—aye, three hundred?"

"Not for twice three hundred, your honor. Life is sweet, and I'd like to see the varlet would lay his down for money?"

"I will give you seven hundred."

"Ah! senor, you know the proverb, 'What is all the world to a dying man?'"

"A thousand then?"

"A thousand?" said the man in gray, his eyes sparkling. "'Tis tempting! But what if I be shot and stripped of it ere I have fairly stowed it in my belt—what then? And yet, 'tis tempting! You'll stay by me and take my parting blessing to my parents and brother, and see that they shall not want, in case I'm shot?"

"I will!"

"Enough. I'll run the risk. Count out the gold!"

They dismounted, and under the shelter of an overhanging rock ratified the bargain.

"St. Catharine shall have the six candles!" muttered the man in gray, mounting in the grave costume of the minister upon the back of the Andalusian. "Nay, an' she take me in safety back to Toledo, I'll generously make the six twelve! It were safer, senor," he said aloud, with his native impudence, "till you are out of the mountains, to forget your real rank, and to remember that you are only a poor courier."

"Thanks for the hint," said the minister, who felt strangely in the ex-valet's greasy suit, which was inhabited by a large population of active and energetic fleas.

"I would also suggest," added Pequilo, without blushing, "that it might help you, in case there should be listeners among the rocks, to address me with the respect that is due from an humble courier to one of my apparent station. For instance, 'I beg leave to remark, my lord,' or 'your honor,' as you may think best. Do you understand?"

"Yes, my lord," said the minister, smiling in spite of himself at the fellow's assurance.

"Ah!" said the ex-valet, with a patronizing gesture, "that is in keeping. You are not without talent, friend! Be careful you continue to remember that I am a lord."

"But will not that add to your danger?"

"Add 'my lord!'" said Pequilo, with dignity.

"I had forgot. But will not that add to your danger, my lord?"

"No, friend. My danger cannot be added to. When robbers, from their lurking places, behold a gentleman, they draw their triggers at him without pausing to inquire his title. By the way, the couple in advance of us have reined in. Let us spur up. They may need our assistance."

"I would beg leave to make a suggestion, my lord?"

"Well, friend?" said the ex-valet, graciously.

"What if they should prove to be a brigand chief and his lieutenant?"

"Add 'my lord!'"

"My lord."

"In such an event, I shall the sooner learn my fate. Forward!"

"The varlet," muttered the minister, "is not wanting in the leading quality of a lord—confidence! By my faith! I like the fellow!"

Notwithstanding the ex-valet's praises of the mule's speed, the Andalusian soon left him far behind; a fact which the aspiring minister was not long in discovering. But as it was not so much for speed as for safety that he had paid so enormous a price for the privilege of owning the sorry-looking animal, he deemed it best to utter no complaint; being, on the contrary, satisfied to set down the sum given for him to profit and loss in the great object of his ambition—namely, the Viceroy's chair.

The strangers consisted of a young effeminate-looking cavalier, and a boy attendant. The former was attired in a suit of plain purple, without ornament; that is to say, in a slouched hat with raven plumes, a shoulder-cloak, a doublet reaching nearly to his knees, silk hose, and high, darkly colored boots. A flat collar of fine Flanders lace set off a throat and neck whose exquisite whiteness and proportions would have filled a sculptor with rapture. The gauntlet on the member that guided his steed announced a hand whose smallness was in keeping with the delicacy of his general contour. His straight features whose faultless outlines had been moulded in one of nature's happiest moods, wore, over their native expression of pensive sweetness, an air of mingled resolution and reserve, as though their owner had recently been roused from his customary tranquility, and was bent upon some solemn purpose. He was mounted upon a small ebon-hued Arabian, whose matchless symmetry of limb, proudly tossing head, fine, yet vigorous muscles, sharply-swelling nostrils, and black, limpid, impatient eyes, testified to the purity of his blood.

The attendant was a short, fat, round-shouldered lad, with a sleek, rosy, churchly air that instinctively suggested the image of a clean, oily, perfumed abbe. He rode a mule as sleek and round-limbed as himself, and sat in his saddle in a manner that would lead a spectator to expect to see him slip off every moment behind the animal's haunches.

On coming up with the party, Pequilo, whose shrewd eye was ever alive to peculiarities, and who knew, by sight, most of the notabilities of Toledo, mentally ejaculated a significant "Wheugh!" for he recognized the features of the cavalier, whom, however, he did not fail to salute with a polite bow.

"A fair day, senor!" he exclaimed, with the smiling nonchalance of one who has unlimited confidence in himself. "Seeing you halt, and knowing the character of the road, I fancied you might be in danger, and have ridden forward to tender you my assistance."

"Thanks, senor," returned the cavalier. "I drew up on purpose to await you; deeming it more prudent to pursue my journey in company, than alone; a thought which was suggested by observing but now some fierce-looking ruffians staring down on us from yonder rocks."

The ex-valet looked up in the direction indicated; but seeing nothing to alarm his fears, remarked with a bravado worthy of his character—

"If the knaves are disposed to give us battle, I will not say them nay. I have not had an adventure these six weeks, and my blade begins to grow rusty. I fear, however," he added laughingly, glancing at the lad, "that in case of an attack, your follower here, who has a saintly look, would betake himself to his knees."

"If," returned the cavalier, "you mean by that that he would make no resistance, you do not know him. But how is it with your own follower, senor? Is he to be depended on?"

"Faith, friend," answered the ex-valet, "the knave you speak of is no follower of mine. He is a poor timid varlet whom I met a few hours since for the first time, and to whom I have accorded my protection out of charity."

"Curse the rascal's impudence!" muttered the minister, boiling with rage.

"Observe his greasy doublet!" continued the ex-valet, coolly. "It is the moral of his manhood. After a whole life, he has nothing better for his back than that wretched mass of rags and filth, which even a beggar would scorn to touch with his fingers! If he had been a man of any parts, could he have got on to gray hairs and a bald crown with no greater accumulation than that! And then look at his beast, too. As I'm a gentleman, such another forlorn hack cannot be found in all Spain. If my scullion were to pick him up in the street, I'd instantly kick him from my service!"

The eyes of the minister glittered.

"Alas! poor man," said the cavalier, "the world perhaps has gone hard with him. Should we reach Madrid in safety, I will provide him with a more presentable suit, and a comelier beast."

"Thanks, senor, thanks!" said the minister. "You have a kindly heart!"

"Silence, varlet!" cried Pequilo. "You presume upon the gentleman's patience, and my good nature. When cavaliers are speaking, individuals of your level should be silent. Take your proper place behind with this gentleman's servant, and see that you stir not from it. Should you find it necessary to address me, remember that I am a lord, and expect to be treated with the deference that is due to my position!"

"I shall not forget, my lord!" said the minister significantly.

"See that you do not, knave! By the way, senor, are you for the capital?"

"I am, my lord," answered the cavalier. "But not in your company, unless you speak more gently to this poor old man."

"A pest upon him, the old dotard!" said the ex-valet, contemptuously. "I do not hold him worthy to clean my stirrups; nor would you, if you knew the foulness of his tongue. As I'm a gentleman, I've thrice had half-a-mind to withdraw my protection, and leave him to his fate!"

"He is poor and gray-haired," said the cavalier, "and therefore has a claim upon your sympathy and respect. As for me, I have ever been taught to venerate the aged, to pity the poor, and feel for the unfortunate. Should you entertain contrary sentiments, then, senor, I must make bold to say that you are wanting in the qualities that I should prefer in a companion."

"Good, senor!" interrupted the minister, gratefully. "I will fight for you, if needs be!"

"Your place, knave!" cried the ex-valet, menacingly. "Remember your place! In what world have you moved, that you do not know that you should not obtrude your remarks upon your betters!"

"Indeed, my lord," said the cavalier, "you are too harsh! The poor old man deserves not your reproaches, and I cannot suffer you to impose upon him in this manner! If you attempt it again, I shall take him under my own protection!"

"Thanks, senor!" cried the minister. "I shall not forget your kindness."

"Again, varlet!" said Pequilo, with a threatening gesture.

The fat boy began to wax indignant, and to wish himself the owner of a sword.

As for the minister he had but one regret, namely—that in exchanging with the courier, he did not reserve his petronel and rapier.

"I have warned you, my lord," said the cavalier.

"What then?" demanded the ex-valet.

"This, sirrah!" returned the cavalier, laying his hand upon his sword.

"Tut, tut!" cried Pequilo. "Ride on a little faster. I have a word for your ear!"

"That expression," said the cavalier, "informs me that you are no lord, but an impostor! If you were a nobleman, instead of requesting me to advance, you would have ordered our followers to fall back!

"Good!" said the fat boy. "Hit him again, master!"

"It appears I have friends, here!" muttered the minister to himself.

"You are too hasty in your conclusion!" said Pequilo, with his usual confidence. "And if you dare to ride forward ten paces, I will make it plain to you."

"Come on, then!" said the cavalier.

The minister and the fat boy at once drew up, as if in anticipation of a combat between the pair.

The ex-valet followed, and drawing near to the cavalier, observed in a low tone:

"My manner towards my companion is only assumed, to blind any who may overhear us."

"For what object?"

"That my friend, who is not what he appears, and who is anxious to reach the capital in safety, may pass on unobstructed."

"Not what he appears!" said the cavalier in surprise.

"No more than I am—no more than *you* are!" said Pequilo, with a dry smile. "For on that miserable mule, which, half an hour ago, was the property of your humble servant, sits no less a personage than the noted Don Juan de Mendoza, the venal minister of justice, who as little suspects that in his gallant champion he beholds none other than the lady to whom he is indebted for the death of his late son, and whose rare beauty and colossal fortune has set half the aspiring bachelors of Toledo by the ears—*Donna Isabel de la Montera!*"

The widow started.

"Who, then, are you, senor?" she demanded, in a disturbed voice.

"I, madam," said Pequilo, "am a poor, much-abused fellow, who, like yourself and his honor the minister of justice, finds it convenient, in view of a private end, to undertake the dangers of a journey to Madrid, towards which city, if you are satisfied with my explanation, madam, we will now, without further ado, resume our steps. Ho, there, varlets—forward!"

The minister and the fat boy touched the flanks of their mules gently with their spurs, and the party was once more in motion.

The widow, understanding that her disguise was seen through, and uncertain as to the character of the individual on the Andalusian, rode on in thoughtful silence.

Pequilo reflected upon a great many things, but principally upon the increase which was given to his individual importance by the ownership of the gallant animal under him, and also of the thousand pistoles which were concealed in the belt that he wore next to his skin. It is true that the possibility of losing both the Andalusian and the thousand pistoles gave him some uneasiness. But then he had great confidence in St. Catharine, who, he felt pretty certain, would screen him from so tremendous a misfortune for the sake of the twelve candles. He had besides some confidence in the speed and bottom of the Andalusian, secondly, in his own dexterity, and thirdly and lastly, in the run of good luck which had been his ever since his second interview with the Viceroy.

The minister, who was engaged in wondering what the courier could have said to the cavalier, had nothing to say to the fat boy, who, for his part, was above noticing so vulgar a person as the greasy owner of the miserable-looking mule, whose forlorn air was in such striking contrast to his own.

For these united reasons, the travelers pursued their journey for some miles without exchanging a word; now descending a hill leading to a small plain, then climbing a rugged steep to a broad plateau, anon crossing a chasm bridged with fallen trees, by and bye defiling through a narrow range, presently moving over a long stretch of comparatively smooth rock, then pushing on through a gloomy forest of mountain firs, and finally striking into a circuitous pathway, whose uneven sides at times nearly touched the clouds, and at others were scarcely on a level with the shoulders of the horses.

The travelers, however, had now passed over the most difficult part of their route, and were mentally congratulating themselves upon that fact, when they were suddenly startled by a loud authoritative command to halt.

Looking up in the direction of the voice, they beheld standing upon a rock, some twenty feet above the pass, which it partially overshadowed, a tall, burly brigand, with a small arsenal of pistols and poniards in his belt, a serviceable sabre at his side, and a long-barreled fusil in his right hand. He was a showy, dashing fellow; with a fine Spanish head, and an eye whose expression was at once bold, reckless, unprincipled, and good-humored. He was dressed in a blue skirt, trimmed with lace and silver; tight-fitting scarlet pantaloons, seamed on the outer sides with fretted satin; and yellow jack boots, with a dark, slouched hat, fringed with Flanders lace, and heavy with gaudy plumes, fastened with a glittering jewel, gave to his general appearance a saucy, devil-may-care air that was worthy of his calling.

"So, friends," he cried, "you have ridden far enough for one day: and as it is not Christian-like to let wayfarers pass one's door without offering them refreshment, suppose you put up awhile with me, and partake of the hospitality of my mountain home?"

"You are very kind, senor," said Pequilo; "but the fact is, my friend, self and servant are in haste to take our farewell of a dying relative, for whose dear sake alone we have undertaken this journey."

"Ah!" said the brigand, with a smile, "I would condole with you, were it not that the frequency of this excuse has hardened me against sympathy. Indeed, by a singular coincidence, about every third traveler is on his way to see a sick or dying relative! But which is your servant?"

"This lad, senor."

"And the owner of the sorry beast beside him?"

"A poor courier, senor, whom we picked up on the road, and who solicited the privilege of riding in our company."

"Let him answer for himself!"

"It is as the cavalier has observed, senor," said the minister, humbly.

"To whom are you bearing despatches?" demanded the brigand.

"To some merchants in Madrid, who are to pay me for my trouble, senor."

"Well," laughingly remarked the brigand, "a few hours' rest will do your poor beast good, and as the merchants cannot reasonably expect you to broil yourself in the sun in their service, you had better lay by awhile with these gentlemen, who, perhaps, may not be unwilling to favor you with some little commissions, which will add to the profits of your journey."

"Shall we risk a bullet by flight?" whispered the ex-valet to the widow, whose cheeks were pale.

"It would be useless," returned the latter. "This man is not alone."

The fat boy was melting in his saddle; not so much with heat from the sun, however, as with warmth arising from fear.

The minister was meditating upon the probabilities in his favor in case he gave a free rein to and buried his spurs in the flanks of Peter, who was hungrily eyeing a tuft of grass shooting out from a crevice in the rock on the right.

"What say you, gentlemen?" demanded the brigand. "Have you made up your minds?"

"I cannot afford to lose my thousand pistoles," muttered the ex-valet to himself, suddenly grazing his horse with his spurs. "Therefore, holy St. Catharine befriend me!"

The Andalusian bounded forward, and the next moment was speeding along the road like a line of light.

Almost at the same instant twenty fusils roared their discharges in the reverberating air. The widow, the minister, and the fat boy looked to see the hair-brained horseman tumble to the earth. But the gallant Andalusian continued to bear him on.

The minister, encouraged by the young man's success, instantly decided upon a like attempt.

"Now, ere the rascals can reload, is my time!" he muttered.

And plunging his spurs into the mule, he boldly dashed after the ex-valet, with whom he hoped soon to come up. But the minister was soon taught the difference between trying to do, and doing. If he calculated upon getting off scot-free, like Pequilo, he reckoned without his host; for he had sped on only a few rods, when a sharp, stinging pain in the spine told him that he was shot, and that the ball had entered a vital spot. A sensation of faintness followed; and grasping the rein with the despairing energy of a man who feels himself sinking, he fell back upon the haunches of his steed, Peter, who, obedient to the restraining motion of the curb, instantly checked his flight, and, catching his balance, came to a dead halt. A couple of brigands leaped, at the same moment, from the rocks down into the road, and caught the body of the rider as it was in the act of slipping from the animal's haunches.

And this, be it observed, doubtless was the difference between the fortunate Pequilo and the unlucky minister of justice; that the ex-valet put his trust in the fair patron, St. Catharine, and got off in safety; while the latter, trusting only to the mule, who was not as fast as a bullet, was speedily brought to a realizing sense of his error; for the ball of the brigand's fusil put a sudden end to his aspirations, closed his account with earth, and sent him to keep company with his five deceased sons, who, like himself, had each bade good night to life's feverish aims, without the benefit of clergy.

"How fares it with him?" laughingly demanded the chief, coolly blowing the smoke from his fusil.

"Dead!" was the reply.

The widow shuddered.

"Then search him, and toss the body to the vultures," said the chief. "As for you, young sir," he added, leaping lightly down from the rock, and grasping the Arabian by the bridle, "I have but two words: We have, as you see, an expeditious way of despatching matters up here in the mountains, and, therefore, as you value the pulsations of your heart, dismount."

The widow did so; and the robber chief instantly took her place in the saddle.

"Now, by St. Dominick! a dainty piece of horse-flesh!" continued the chief, patting the animal gently on the neck, "and worth, I doubt not, his weight in silver. But you are pale, senor! Fie upon your manhood! If your lady fair could see you now, she would hesitate ere she entrusted herself to your keeping. What, trembling, too?"

"With indignation, sir!" answered the widow, feeling it necessary to say something.

The brigand laughed.

"*Such* indignation!" he exclaimed. "But no matter. We'll have some sport with you, unless your purse be deeper than your courage. Ho, my fat knight!" he continued, turning to Sancho, for it was he, "if you shake thus on a hot day like this, what will you do when the cold airs of winter come? Down, boy, and give your white-faced master a place; for we have a ride before us, and it is not seemly that so delicate a boy as this should be subjected to the rude stones of our mountains, which have no respect for the delicate nurslings of the city. Down, I say, and mount the beast of the late courier, who is now, I doubt not, saying an ave with great energy in purgatory."

Sancho, without saying a word, did as he was bid, and the widow also; and the robber chief, turning off from the road, led the way in single file up a narrow path to an extensive plateau, which commanded a view for many miles around, and from which the party could behold the lucky ex-valet speeding uninterruptedly on his way to Madrid.

The widow silently rejoiced at his escape, and wondered whether on arriving at the capital he would remember his late less fortunate companions, and generously take measures for their rescue.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE TWILIGHT IN THE HEART.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

A long, bright day with deep blue skies,
  And wooing winds that sighed to part,
And sweet song-birds and all we prize,
  Have left a twilight in the heart.
Deep and more deep the shadows fall,
  Sad and still sadder sighs the breeze,
And mournful birds begin to call
  From gloomy groves of cypress trees.

I think upon the morning now:
  'Twas bright—and evanescent too;
Its flowers all faded on my brow
  Ere scarce an hour had drunk their dew.
The noon was brilliant—that, too, passed;
  The evening softly wandered by;
And soon a splendid sunset cast
  Its golden glory from the sky.

Then came the twilight in the heart—
  Alas, how sad is twilight there!
From dusky shadows fair forms start,
  And love-sighs tremble on the air;
Lone fire-flies lend a fitful lamp
  To mock with faint and wavering light;
And while the dew comes chill and damp
  We dream and sigh for rest and night.

For night—a dim and mystic night
  That brings the mournful mind no dreams—
Or blessed ones of love and light,
  Caught but from memory's sunny gleams;
For night—the night that seems so dark,
  Whose splendid stars are hid away
In clouds that show no glimmering spark—
  For night, for night, for night—we pray!

BILKINS JOINS A CLUB.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Marmaduke Bilkins was a shoemaker, and he fancied he did quite a business. At all events, he had four hundred dollars laid up at home—four hundred hard silver dollars. And yet Marmaduke had been quite a number of years in accumulating that sum. He was now thirty-seven years old, and had been married thirteen years. He had four children to support, and he did it well.

If Marmaduke had a fault it was his desire to be thought "smart." He had suffered himself to be made a candidate for one of the overseers of the poor; and though he got defeated, Bumpkins going in by three hundred majority, yet the nomination gave him a new importance in his own eyes. Before election he gave an oyster supper at the tavern, to which his constituents—the leading ones—were invited. The wine was good—an article, by the way, which Bilkins hadn't used for years—and Marmaduke was voted, unanimously, to be a capital fellow. Toasts were drank—toasts about "Wine and Women," and about "Live and be merry," and about all sorts of things. In short it was a jolly time.

When Marmaduke went home he ascended to his chamber singing a capital song, the chorus of which ran—

"We wont go home till morning—
Till daylight doth appear."

He forgot several things on that occasion. He forgot to wind up his watch; he forgot to take off his cravat and dickey; he forgot to take off his stockings, and didn't blow the light out. He had intended to tell his wife all about the glorious songs and toasts, but on the following morning he couldn't remember anything about them, save that he made himself hoarse in his efforts to give them due applause.

Prudence Bilkins shook her head, but said nothing. She saw that her husband was suffering enough without any help from her.

But that night's entertainment introduced Marmaduke into new company for him. The village had changed wonderfully since he was young. A railroad had brought it close to the city, and city fashions had been introduced. A billiard-hall had been opened, and a bowling-saloon put in operation. But until the night of the oyster supper Marmaduke had known none of the sporting characters save by sight, though he had often wished that he could become acquainted with them. There were Blobson, and Jenkins, and Fundy. How nicely they dressed, and how genteel they were. What aristocratic airs they wore, and how gracefully they lounged about the piazza of the large, new hotel. And then how the fine ladies that came out from the city in the summer seemed to admire them. Marmaduke longed to know them.

And Marmaduke knew them. They were at his oyster supper, and swore to support him for office. They were the ones who drank most of his wine, and gave the finest toasts, and sang the best songs.

Marmaduke was a happy man. Blobson and Jenkins bowed to him in the street, and Fundy shook hands with him and asked him how he did. But the cup wasn't half full yet, though Marmaduke thought it was. On the very next day Jenkins himself—gay, dashing, fashionable Jenkins—came into Marmaduke's shop—came fairly into the humble shop—and asked Marmaduke to lend him ten dollars! What joy. Never before had Marmaduke relinquished a ten dollar bill with such happiness! Only to think that *Jenkins*—the courted, the admired, the *gentleman* Jenkins, should seek the *friendly* aid of Marmaduke Bilkins!

Marmaduke went that very night and ordered a new suit of clothes. He wanted them fashionably cut—the coat must be blue, with bright buttons; and the pants with extensive figures in the pattern.

By and by Blobson, Jenkins, and Fundy, with a few more of their stripe, laid out the plans for a Jockey Club. They selected a spot of land for a race-course, and were going into it extensively. Among the first who were visited was Marmaduke Bilkins.

"We want public spirited men to uphold our country's honor," said Blobson. "Men who are not afraid of exercise. We have called upon you first, because we want the influence of your name."

Marmaduke put his name down for twenty dollars towards purchasing the ground and preparing it; and he was very proud and very happy. His sporting friends had talked it all into him until he really believed he was going to do his country a service.

"Prudence," said our hero, coming out from their little sitting-room into the kitchen, "where is the key of that drawer?"

"What drawer?" asked the wife, looking up from her work. She was making a coat for one of the tailors in the place.

"Why—the key to the little bureau drawer."

"What do you want of that?"

"Never mind—I want it."

Prudence Bilkins started. Something had struck her. Never—never before—had her husband made such an answer. For some time she had noticed that his mind was very much occupied with something besides his ordinary business.

"Will you tell me what you want of that key?" she said, in a tone which had never yet failed to bring Marmaduke to his senses.

Finally he sat down and told his wife the story, and explained the objects he had in view. She gazed upon him in blank wonder while he was speaking, but by the time he had concluded she fully understood the matter. She knew her husband's easy nature; and she also knew what a large share of love of approbation he had. He was mentally unable to shine in any intellectual sphere, and he had now found a field in which he fancied he could "spread himself." She had seen the fashionable loungers of whom Marmaduke had spoken, and she knew their characters well; and she knew, too, that they were just the ones to wield a great influence over him."

"*You* buy a horse!" she uttered, after pondering a few moments. "Why, Marm. Bilkins——"

"Look here: Don't you call me *Marm* Bilkins. I don't like it!"

"But, my dear Marmaduke—you'll let me speak, I know"

"Why—in course you may speak; but I won't be called *Marm.*"

"But about this horse, my dear;—and this money you must pay for the land—and all the other expenses."

"What *other* expenses, I'd like to know?"

"Your time is worth something, Marm—aduke; and then you know there must be other outlays. But set that all aside. There's twenty dollars—and it'll swell to fifty before you get through,—and your horse will be over a hundred, of course."

"I mean to get a good one."

"Of course you will. And now just look at it. *You*—Marmaduke Bilkins—with a family—struggling to lay up enough with which to buy a house of your own—a respectable citizen—and now honored by your worthy friends,—*you* going to join a jockey club! Why—you must be crazy."

"But I ain't crazy, Mrs. Bilkins. I mean to have my way, I tell you, now! What's life good for if you can't enjoy yourself? What was our love of happiness given to us for, if we wasn't to be happy? I've slaved and dug about long enough. I'm going in for some of the *enjoyments* of life now. I want you to understand that!"

Prudence did not reply. She saw that somebody had been putting all that nonsense into his head, and she knew him well enough to know that any direct opposition of hers would only make him more headstrong. He would not have Blobson and Jenkins suppose that his wife governed him for anything.

Marmaduke Bilkins was one of those men who fondly believe that they rule affairs at home with a rod of iron. There are many such in the world. Under the influence of a tyrant wife they become almost imbecile; and under the influence of a timid, retiring woman they become tyrants themselves; but beneath the influence of such a woman as Prudence Bilkins was, they become just what Marmaduke was—a strictly governed, wife-obeying husband without knowing it. Prudence held her thumb most firmly upon her simple consort, and he never dreamed of it.

"Now where's that key?"

"But when must you pay this money in?"

"I don't know. But I want to be ready to pay when they call for it. If we get a good spot of land, we'll have the State fair here another year; and that'll be worth ten thousand dollars to this town."

"It will?"

"Yes."

"But of course you won't pay out your money until you have seen the land selected."

"Why—no. Certainly not."

Prudence told him where the key was, and he went away.

On the evening of the following day, just as Marmaduke was getting up from the tea-table, some one knocked at the door. One of the boys went, and when he returned he was followed by no less a personage than Pete Bunker. Pete was not only one of the most notorious horse-jockeys in that section, but he was an own cousin to Prudence. He was about forty years of age, dressed in heavy top-boots, drab breeches, a jockey coat of the same color, and a light, jaunty cap.

"Well, Prudence," he said, as he took a seat, "I have found just the thing you want."

"Oh—I am glad," cried Mrs. Bilkins, with evident satisfaction. "How old is he?"

"Just seven last spring."

"And how heavy?"

"About ten hundred."

"What color?"

"Pure black."

"Oh! I'm glad of that: And what's the price?"

"Only two hundred."

"O—that's cheap if he's perfectly sound."

"I'll warrant him sound and kind."

"And now about his speed—how is that?"

"He can trot a mile in three and a half, easy."

"But—wh-wh- what's all this?" stammered Marmaduke in blank astonishment.

"Only a little trade of mine, my dear. Keep still a moment." Then turning to Pete, Prudence resumed,

"Where did this animal come from?"

"A fellow named Blobson brought him out here."

"And sold him, eh?"

"Well—I don't know about that. A man from the city came out with a sort of claim on the property, and Blobson gave it up."

"You are sure that he did not give it up on account of any defect?"

"Bless your soul, yes. I'm as sure as can be. This Blobson hasn't got a red cent of his own. He manages to borrow a little here and there, when he can't make it by gambling. No, no, I'll warrant the animal sound."

"Well, Pete—I'll come around to-morrow and look at him."

"All right," said the jockey; and thus speaking he arose and left the house.

For about two minutes Marmaduke looked his wife in the face. Then he said,—

"Prudence Bilkins, what does this mean?"

"Why—can't you guess?"

"Never mind. I want to know."

"Well—I'll tell you: I was reading the other day, in a celebrated work, that for females there was no exercise more healthy than horseback riding. You know I am shut up here from morning till night—week in and week out—and have been so for over thirteen years. Thus far I have worked hard, and worked without ceasing; but now I am going in for some of the *enjoyments* of life. I am going to feed my love of happiness. You know our home don't afford the joys we need. And then only think: how nice it will be for you and me to ride out together. Wont some people be envious? I'll bet they will!"

"But—but—the money, Prudence——"

"O—I have that. For the last ten years I have been digging over coats and vests for Mr. Snip, and now I'm going to have the good of it. I did think that by another spring I'd have about five hundred dollars to put with five hundred of yours; and then we'd buy a snug little home somewhere; but what's the use of throwing away all our happiness just for a house! No, no,—give me a horse! Three minutes on the road!—Ahead of anything! What times we will have!"

Marmaduke Bilkins was completely nonplussed. He knew the money was his wife's—that is, the money she meant to use—though he had not suspected that she had made so much. He had never known how hard she worked.

"Nonsense," he finally articulated. "*You* buy a horse. Who ever heard of such a thing!"

"Did you ever see a lady ride horseback, Marmaduke Bilkins?"

"Why—I *have* seen such a thing, I s'spose."

"Yes—I don't doubt it. Doesn't Mrs. Puffer own a horse? Doesn't Mrs. Johnson own one? And don't both the Bumby girls own horses? And don't they all ride just when they please?"

"Ah—but they are rich, Mrs. Bilkins. They can afford it."

"Do tell, Marm Bil—aduke—kins. They can afford it, can they? And why didn't you think of that before? I can afford it, too, sir; so don't say any more on that score."

"But *do* you mean to buy a horse?"

"Of course I do."

"Pooh! Nonsense!"

And there the matter rested for the while.

On the following day Prudence put on her bonnet and went down to her cousin's stable. He was there alone.

"Now I tell you, upon my word of honor, Pru.," said Bunker, "you cannot possibly make a better investment. The man who had the claim on this horse has taken him, and put him into my hands for sale. He knows nothing about horses. Blobson owed him three hundred dollars, and he got this horse and a gold watch. The watch was well worth a hundred, and he says I may sell the horse for two hundred. Still I wouldn't sell him to any one else so. Buy him, and I promise to take him back if you can't dispose of him in any other way."

Prudence bought the horse, and engaged Pete to feed him up, and keep him clean and neat. That evening Pete Bunker called again just as Marmaduke was getting up from supper. Prudence gave him twenty gold eagles, and he gave her a bill-of-sale of the horse, and then departed.

"Prudence Bilkins, *have* you bought a horse?"

"I have, Marm Bil—ah—excuse me— —a duke-kins. I have bought the horse, sir. And now for fun!"

Marmaduke was entirely "taken down" by this summary operation. He had not believed that his wife would do any such thing. And as he began to reflect he became reasonable. When he found that his wife had five hundred dollars, he saw that they could buy a home if they wished. The sight of all that gold going for a horse hurt his feelings.

"You don't expect your horse to keep himself, do you?" he ventured.

"How do you intend to keep yours?" she responded.

"But I—I—haven't got one yet."

"Haven't?" uttered Prudence, in surprise. "Why—I thought you were going after one at once. If *you* don't buy one—why, then I'm sure I don't want one. I thought you and I would have such good times riding. The expense of keeping two horses ain't much—not over two hundred dollars a-year."

"Eh?" What? Two hundred?"

"Yes. It costs seventy dollars a year, at the least calculation, to keep one good horse as he should be kept. That makes one hundred and forty dollars. And then there's our house-rent—sixty-five—makes two hundred and five dollars."

"Our *house-rent?*"

"Yes. If we had concluded to buy a house, you know, we should have no rent to pay."

Marmaduke Bilkins put on his hat and walked out.

On the next morning Blobson called in and asked Marmaduke if he couldn't pay his twenty dollars just as well then as at any time. But Marmaduke hesitated; and thereupon Blobson flew into a passion, and called his friend a "miserable, shoemaking, sneaking, lying rascal."

Marmaduke slipped down from his bench, and having opened the shop-door, he seized Mr. Blobson by the collar of the blue-coat with bright buttons, and the seat of the fancy unmentionables, and pitched him head foremost from his premises.

The sporting gentleman had no desire to venture again within reach of those huge arms, so he picked himself up, and having threatened all sorts of dire vengeance, he went away; and Marmaduke never saw him again.

That evening, just before dark, Pete Bunker came around and informed Prudence that Mr. Bunby wanted to buy her horse.

"He's got one—a jet black—that's just a perfect match for this one, and he says he must have it."

"Well," said Prudence, "let him go. But keep quiet about it."

However, there was no need of keeping quiet, for in half-an-hour afterwards Marmaduke came home and told his wife that he'd concluded not to join *that* club.

That was all that was said at that particular time.

On the next morning Marmaduke went to his work later than usual; and when Pete Bunker called he found the host in. He would have kept his business to himself, but Prudence whispered to him that all was right. As soon as he understood this, he drew out a piece of stout linen cloth, and laid it upon the table.

"That's yours," he said to his fair cousin.

She opened it, and counted thirty gold eagles.

"But here's three hundred dollars!"

"Aye—that's what I made Bunby pay for the horse. I told him it belonged to a lady who had bought it for her own use, and that she would not sell without an inducement. When he found out that the horse could travel a mile inside of four minutes, and that a woman could drive him, he said he must have him. Three hundred was his own offer. And, by the way—Bunby wants to sell his little white cottage by the willows."

"How much?" asked Marmaduke, quickly.

"He says he'll sell to an honest, sober man, with cash, for eight hundred. It cost him twelve to build it, to my certain knowledge."

"What say you, Prudence—shall we buy it?"

"Yes."

And the cottage was bought; and when Marmaduke got fairly settled down inside of it, he declared he was never so happy in his life.

"What a fool I liked to have made of myself," he said to his wife, as they sat upon their piazza gazing off into the pretty garden.

"How so?" she asked innocently.

"Why—with that jockey club."

"O—that? Well, well—that is passed. But you know I went ahead of you in that; for I actually invested two hundred dollars in horse-flesh!"

"O, yes—I understand all that, Prudence."

Pete Bunker, who happened to be turning the corner at that moment, caught Marmaduke Bilkins in the very act of kissing his (Bunker's) cousin!

THE PARTING.

Farewell! I must leave thee,
  Thou "star of my heart,"
But do not forget me,
  Altho' I depart.

Remember me *ever*
  In kindness, I pray,
Forget me, oh, never,
  Tho' far, far away.

Thy strong arm is pressing
  Me close to thy breast,
'Twill be *long* e'er again
  On this pillow I rest.

Oh, life can no pleasure
  Away from thee give,
If I may not dwell near thee,
  I ask not to live.

ROOM FOR THE CHILDREN.

Yes—room for children. Room and freedom for them at home, that they may expand and strengthen those faculties and functions which are soon to constitute the man-and-womanhood of a generation. Room for them in the nursery and on the play-ground, with opportunity and freedom to exercise, if you would have them hearty, cheerful, and home-loving. Too much, in the main, are children burrowed and quashed at home—at home, where they should be encouraged to gambol and rejoice—at home, where their voices should ring out merry as the voices of summer birds. Room for the children at school. At school, where they are too often imprisoned, stifled, and dwarfed in body and mind. Room and freedom for the children at school, that they may breathe fresh air, and commune with their teachers, not as masters—stern, unbending, and unsympathising—but as intellectual guides and social friends. Room for the children at church, too, and see that they are *attracted*—as they can be—thither, and not driven with the "rod of correction," or the chilling rebuke. More room, greater care for, and a higher common estimate of children, if you would stimulate their ambition to win your regard. Children are generally older, more observing, and more capable than they seem. The less you ignore them, the less will they ignore you. The more you cultivate them, the more will they cultivate you. Give them no room, and teach them to think you believe them nobodies, and ten to one they will strive to justify such a belief. Room for the children, God's holiest and tenderest blessing—the light of our homes and the delight of our hearts. Room for them everywhere, and not least in the public place, the public conveyance, at the public table. Tuck them not in a corner, crowd them not to the wall, leave them not forever to the second course and the fragments of the feast, unless you would have them grow up thoughtless of justice and selfish as yourselves, to practice in turn upon their children as you practice upon them. Do unto children, always, even as ye, when ye were children, would have been done by. Thus, reader of the LEDGER, shall you enlarge and soften many an intellect and heart; thus prevent many a home being made sad and desolate by domestic bitterness. Room for the children—room.

A COMPLAINT COMPLAINED OF.

Margaret Fuller says, writing of George Sand, "She disappoints me, * * * her remarks on Lavater seem really shallow. No self-ruling Aspasia she, but a frail woman, mourning over her lot. Any peculiarity in her destiny seems accidental; she is forced to this and to that to earn her bread, forsooth!"

Woman has been pitied, and mourned over, and sneered at, from the beginning of time until now, because she is woman and not man. In the few instances in which she has discovered a manly grasp of mind, it has been regretted for her by the world that she had not also a manly heart—that in spite of her intellect and genius she was still found making mistakes and bewailing them—impulsive more than reasonable, and in her weakness and dependence reaching out of herself everlastingly and everlastingly.

I for one would not have her—

"Deny her woman's nature with a manly scorn"—

I would not have her other than she is, nor, indeed, much better than she is, unless man could be lifted up and made more worthy of her than it seems to me he is likely to be very speedily.

That which we call her weakness is her best strength, and that truthful belief in nobility and goodness which makes her dependent, is her finest ornament. In her arms and in her heart there is always room for the poor outcast borne down by the harsher judgment of men—there is no brand of shame, no murderous spot that she will not cover up with her white charitable hands, and though she sees them herself, refuse to have the world see and condemn. Much as I admire strength—much as I worship genius, the qualities which I most love in woman. are those which are womanly.

ALICE CARY.

THE DEGREES OF LOVE.

Of all passions in the world, love not only is the most tyrannical, and takes the deepest hold, but is also speediest in its transformation, and in its change of the scenery round us; nay, the scenery environing the heart. That love is the great sweetener of our existence—the active and stirring principle—the spring which sets everything in motion—the vivid awakener, exponent and representation of all the finest, most delicate, and subtlest movements in our spiritual nature, who could deny? But it must differ in all minds: the tasteful can love but with taste; the delicate with delicacy; the fervent and eager with high impellant strength, and burning completeness and abandonment. There is love which once aroused—called to the surface from its tender fountain, and boiling up from its placid depths, becomes like the torrent sweeping on in impetuosity, rising up against and surmounting with fury all the petty obstacles and small interruptions which envy and cautious policy, the coldness or worldliness of man seek to interpose to it. Love is such a giant power that it seems to gather strength from obstruction, and at every difficulty rises to higher might. It is all dominant—all conquering; a grand leveller which can bring down to its own universal line of equalization the proudest heights, and remove the stubbornest impediments. There is no hope of resisting it, for it outwatches watch—submerges everything, acquiring strength as it proceeds; ever growing, nay, growing out of itself.

NELLIE GREY.

BY WILLIE E. PABOR.

Will you tell me, if I ask you,
Is your heart mine, Nellie Grey?
Is my name linked with your future,
In your dreams by night and day?
Ask your heart, and give me answer
Nellie Grey, Nellie Grey!

In my thoughts, your name forever
Cometh upmost, Nellie Grey;
Like an amulet it lieth
On my beating heart to-day—
And I cannot keep it secret,
Nellie Grey, Nellie Grey!

No! I cannot keep the secret,
So I yield it, Nellie Grey,
With my heart, unto your keeping,
Hold them, loved one, from decay—
And my tears will be your blessing,
Nellie Grey, Nellie Grey!

Yes! my life will be a crowning
To your own life, Nellie Grey;
And our love shall gather glories
From the heights whereon they lay—
And our hearts be filled with sunshine,
Nellie Grey, Nellie Grey!

Will you then return me answer
To my question, Nellie Grey?
Since you hold my heart and secret,
Cast them not as chaff away,
But say "Yes" to all my questions.
Nellie Grey, Nellie Grey!

◆

FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 26.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER P. DUNLAP.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

While we were searching in vain for adventure about Lake Caddo we came upon Uncle Abner for our evenings' amusement. The day had been spent in a fruitless search for valuable game, and after supper we gathered about our host, and demanded a continuation of his narrative.

"Come—you left us right in an interesting place of your experience," said Ben. "You had shot a lion; and you had begged of the knot-heads to let you alone. Now give us the rest."

"Well," said the old man, "if I am going to tell you all my adventures I must take them in turn. So keep quiet and I'll give ye the whole yarn. After we'd taken that lion I had an adventure of the hardest kind—an escape as narrow as ever was experienced by mortal man.

"It was quite late in the day when the lion was brought in, and I concluded to remain until the following morning. But when the morning came I found the native villagers moving for another lion-hunt. One of the finest horses in the place had been killed during the night, and his carcass dragged over a mile from the village, where it had been half eaten, and then left among some bushes. I could not resist the temptation, so I concluded to go out with them.

"After breakfast I took my arms and ammunition and joined the villagers. We pursued a different course from the one taken the day before, the body of the horse having been dragged off towards the southward; while we had found the lion already slain to the north. About half a mile from the village we entered a narrow defile between two mountains, through which ran a small stream of water, and which was very fertile, all kinds of trees and shrubbery growing in ample profusion. This defile led us to a mass of rocks which we were obliged to climb over, the stream making its way somewhere beneath them.

"The Nubians went over like so many mountain goats, but I had more difficulty, for the way was rough and hard, the traveler being obliged to leap from crag to crag, and sometimes with a fair prospect of landing in a chasm forty or fifty feet deep. But I got over, and upon the other side we found the open stream again.

"We were now in one of the most romantic spots I ever saw. It was a ravine, like the one we had left, only wider, with tall grass growing upon the banks of the stream; beautiful trees, without underbrush, standing in even rows; flowers in wild luxuriance; and, upon either hand an almost perpendicular wall of rock. We had followed this a short distance when I was sure that I saw a motion among some shrubbery, by the bank of the stream, some sixty to a hundred rods ahead. The dogs commenced to bark, and in a moment more a flock of gazelles started up from the stream and made for the mountain. They were beautiful creatures, and the moment I saw them I was determined to have one if possible.

"I had started in pursuit when the old chief called me back. Through Abdac he told me it would be of no use to give chase to the gazelles, for I could not overtake them. But I had great confidence in my good rifle. Bows and arrows might be useless things among the mountains, but I felt sure that I could get a shot. At all events I was determined to try, and so I told them. Abdac said that if I were not particular about his going I had better go alone, for the more men there were in pursuit the more shy the creatures would be. I told him I had rather go alone. 'Be careful, for you've got a wild path,' cried my guide. I told him to have no fears on my account, and then started.

"I had seen where the gazelles disappeared, and when I reached the spot I found a narrow cleft between two huge rocks, and the path was well trodden, showing that the nimble creatures had a regular passage here to the water. I pushed on, and soon came to a rocky ascent, up which I made my way as quickly as possible. I had gained the summit of the first distinct eminence, and here I stopped to take a view of the premises, for I did not wish to get lost. I could see the stream in the vale beneath, but the projecting rock hid my companions. I saw that the stream entered the ravine only a short distance above me, and appeared to come out from the foot of the mountain beyond me. I saw that the water was white with foam where it left the rocks, and of course I supposed it must form a cataract at no great distance.

"From the tracks which I could see I judged that the gazelles had gone to the southward, and I bent my steps that way, descending first a slight hollow, and then climbing up an eminence much higher than the one I had left. Thus had I gone some little distance, when I saw the animals about forty rods in advance of me. They were upon a shelving rock, and the moment they saw me they started; but I had my rifle at my shoulder in an instant, and as I fired I saw one of the gazelles fall. He struggled up—staggered a few paces—then reeled, and fell again.

"With a glad shout I started forward. The animal was still struggling, and I feared he might make off, as, from his motions, I judged that I had broken both his hind legs. On I went, over rock and crag, thinking of nothing but gaining my prize. When within a few yards of the gazelle I saw an open space just ahead. It seemed to be not over six feet wide, and, I supposed, only a fissure in the top of the rock. I heard a dull roar, as of tumbling water, which I knew must be the cataract of the stream. I came to the edge of the opening—my eye upon the gazelle, and upon the opposite side of the fissure—and with the simple assurance that I could leap it easily, I made the spring.

"I cleared the space as I had calculated, but I leaped not upon a firm footing. I struck a bank of moss, and slipped. When I found myself going I dropped my rifle, which landed on the rock in safety, and fell forward. But it would not save me. The whole of the moss-bank gave way beneath my weight, and I knew I must go. Yet I spread out my hands and tried to grasp the surface of the rock; I struck my toes against the hard wall below; but all to no purpose.

"It is a curious sensation to find yourself slipping—slipping—gradually going down—down—down—you know not where—but only know that you cannot save yourself. But can you imagine my emotions when I gazed down and found myself over a deep, dark chasm, through which dashed the roaring torrent?

"With one wild yell of horror and despair I shut my eyes and spread my hands upon the rock. I fell—fell—slowly for a moment—then more swiftly—and, as the last breath escaped my lips previous to closing my mouth forever, as I then thought, I found myself suddenly stopped. There was a pressure upon my hips and upon my shoulders, and I was stationary. I opened my eyes and looked down. I had been caught where the space between the walls was narrow.

"It was some time ere I could collect my senses sufficiently to enable me fully to realise my position; but I discovered it at length.

"The chasm, from the top, was certainly a hundred and fifty feet deep, and I had fallen not quite fifty feet. I could see only about twenty yards on either hand, owing to the devious course of the gulf, and I should say the walls were on an average three yards apart; but I had fallen where two humps stood out opposite to each other, leaving a space of about a foot in the narrowest part. Had I been face to the rock when I reached this point, I should have been gone; but my hips and shoulders saved me from that fate.

"But what was that to me then? Below me, over a hundred feet distant, the torrent dashed over a bed of black, jagged rocks, howling its death-song in my ears. Above me I could see the two walls of stone, smooth and even, and beyond a space of open sky. I looked to see if the space grew any narrower immediately below me; but it did not. My hips were in the narrowest place. My feet hung within a space wider than was necessary to let me through.

"Oh! my Lord of mercy! what a situation! I dared not struggle, for I had found that if I settled three inches more I must fall, and be dashed in pieces upon the torrent-lashed rocks below! And yet I was surely working downward! I could feel the friction upon my hips. I spread my elbows with all my might, and for awhile held myself stationary.

"And now I began to cry out for help. 'Surely,' I thought, 'my companions will come for me. They will wonder why I stay so long. They must have heard the report of my rifle, and may come up to help me to secure my game.' But a new fear came upon me. Could my voice be heard above the roar of the mountain torrent! I believed not!

"But I cannot tell you all the thoughts that passed through my mind; only you may naturally suppose that the fear of death was uppermost. How was I to escape? Even though I should maintain my position where I was, I could not survive a great while, even there.

"After a silence of some minutes I commenced to cry out again, and as I did so I gazed upward. In a few seconds I saw a human head. Abdac's face was attached to it. In a moment more Mada also looked over. You can imagine how I begged of them to save me. They gazed a little while—I could see them move their lips, but I could hear no words. The roar of the torrent drowned all other sounds, and of course I knew they could not hear anything I had said.

"In a few moments they disappeared. Had they gone for help, or had they fled in fright. I hoped they had gone for help, and for awhile I gave myself up to anticipations of life.

"But hope began to fail me! My strength was going. Had I been caught by the breast and back there would have been two results not apparent as it was. First, I should have been in no danger of slipping further down, because the chest would have swollen. When a man is caught thus, by a pressure upon the breast, the lungs gradually become inflated; the diaphragm loses its power, and of course the body swells. And, the second result would have been, that life would have left my body long ere Abdac and Mada came.

"The moments sped on, and it seemed an hour since my two guides had left. My strength was almost gone. I had settled until there was surely not over an inch of leeway left. One inch more, and I must go! Oh! my God! how I prayed then! My heart seemed ready to burst—my arms ready to break! Every nerve had become a seat of pain the most exquisite, and every muscle was racked with torture! Only the one undying hope of life held me up. With the last atom of physical strength I pressed my elbows against the rock, and groaned in my agony. I cried like a child—wept hot scalding tears—and under the influence of the relaxation I slipped a mite towards my destruction. Then I would stop crying and strain every nerve to press my shoulders and elbows out. The pain grew insupportable again, and I cried like a baby once more!

"Another slip of my body! I felt the friction plainly! Only the fraction of an inch; but yet it was the fraction of an inch nearer to a death already upon me! And I could feel that my hips had settled to a wider space. The pressure upon them was lessened! I was going! With all my expiring energy I threw out my feet and ground them against the smooth walls. I cried frantically to God for help! One more struggle—would help ever come? 'Oh! Heaven save me!' Ha! What was that?

"Something hit my shoulders. I looked up, and saw a stout rope dangling above me, and at the top I saw Abdac peering over! It was the rope the natives had brought out with which to make a lion trap if they should find him in a cave. It was long enough and stout enough. Stout enough to hold a lion would surely hold me. I looked again, and saw a dozen heads over the edge of the gorge. I caught the rope with one hand; but how should I secure it? I could not bear my weight upon my hands, for my arms were even now ready to break. What should I do?

"I was ready to give up when I observed that Abdac had formed a noose upon the end of the rope. A single look convinced me that 'twould stand. It was a bowline knot. I gave the rope a jerk, and they lowered it. I jerked again—and again—until it was where I could put my feet within the noose. Then I drew down on it. I felt the rope tighten, and with one deep heave of long pent up breath, I let my shoulders from their strain. On the instant I did so I slipped through the narrow space, and for a second I thought I was gone! But the rope brought me up.

"With my feet in the noose, and my hands clasping the line above my head, I stood as straight as possible, and waited for my friends. But could they draw me up through the space where I had come down? Yes—yes—of course. I turned my face to the rock, and in this way I went through easy enough!

"In a few minutes more I stood upon the solid rock with my friends around me. They knew how it had all happened, for they saw the wounded gazelle upon the opposite side, and the place where the moss-bank had been torn away. One of the natives sprang over and killed the fainting animal, it having lost nearly all its blood, and threw it back to us, and then brought over my rifle. I had broken the hind legs, as I supposed, the ball having passed through both of them, near the thighs, severing some of the arteries.

"My legs had some strength remaining in them, so I could walk very well by being assisted over the hard places; but it was a week before my arms were strong enough to hold my rifle to my shoulder.

"I tell you, boys—that's what I call 'A Narrow Escape!'

And we agreed with him.

◆

DEAR MAGGIE.

She found the discipline of life
More than her heart could bear;
And so she turned her to the grave,
And sought for refuge there.

And now she lies with folded hands,
In an unbroken sleep;
With peaceful heart, and tearless eye,
Where none can make her weep.

A. M.

◆

SEEING AND OBSERVING.

Seeing and observing are two different things. One man shall look at a steam-engine—wonder, and go on his way as ignorant of its *principle* as he was before his eye was dazzled by the fly-wheel—puzzled by the governor, or his ear astounded by the whirl of wheels: he saw—but understood not;—his unobservant mind failed in appreciating the genius of steam. Therefore to quote Wordsworth, he was not

"a wiser man
Than he had been before."

That was the seeing,—the merely *seeing* man Now, let us take cognizance of the *observing* man. He looks into the wonderful machine;—dives into its mysteries; and understands what he sees. His quick eye detects in an instant the hidden power. The crank goes slowly—the wheels revolve quickly—innumerable wheels within wheels do not puzzle him. With majestic movement the piston slides up and down the cylinder into which the genius of steam rushes. He wonders, but is not confounded! All is plain to him, for he is not superficial. Chemistry may not have showered its wealth of wisdom on his head; his condition may be humble; but his thoughts fly to the inventor of the great moving mass of iron before him. He remembers James Watt toiling and thinking:—Fulton launching the first fire-boat; and triumphing in the knowledge of his sound principle, while sneers hissed in his scientific ears. Tracing great events from little causes, he wonders, and admires! Brunel with his lightning-like Great Western Engine rushes over his mind; and Stephenson flashes before his mental eye. The Electric Telegraph he does not omit to notice, for he is well aware that steam generates electricity. Gazing on the powerful machine, he shrinks into his own mind, there to ponder on the source of Power! Such to our minds is the *observant* man.

◆

Sicilian Lovers.—It has been wittily said of the Sicilians, that no person could pass for a man of gallantry who had not got a cold, and was sure never to succeed with his mistress unless he made love in a hoarse voice. This arose from the custom of serenading the object of preference during the hours of the night, by the execution of vocal and instrumental music under their balconies. The Sicilians are a nation of poets; and the lover who cannot celebrate his mistress's charms in verse would be thought unworthy of her attention.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Cæsar.—If you are determined to die in case "the other chap marries the girl," we see no objection to such a consummation if you will only do it in a natural and legitimate way. Do not let us have any knives or pistols, however; nor arsenic, brucine, or strychnine. Such things are highly improper implements with which to open the gates of death. Seriously, however, are you not ashamed to "go on at such a rate" about a girl of seventeen? Is she the only girl in the world? And then it seems that she does not love you! and yet you are going to die for her. For shame! If she loved you devotedly, it would be worth while to sacrifice your life for her, in case such an act of heroism should become necessary. But a man who will contemplate dying of disappointment on account of the marriage of a girl who does not care a button for him, must be a pusillanimous fellow.

C. L.—It is difficult to ascertain from the conduct of some girls whether they love you or not. When they love the most, they are often the most nonchalant in their behavior. Declare your own sentiments, and then you can find out what your sweetheart's are.

Theodore.—It is a terrible thing to be bitten by a dog which one even has the remotest suspicion of being mad, and so far from rebuking your anxiety your friends should share and sympathize with it. You should at once apply to some experienced physician.

Vivien.—You cannot buy a commission in the American Army. The sum necessary to purchase a cornet's commission in the British Life Guards, or the Horse Guards is, we believe, $6,000.

Inquirer.—Affairs of love should if possible be conducted with the same wisdom and discretion as other matters. When lovers get into difficulty they should try to get out of it as speedily as possible and with as little damage and unhappiness. If your rival has lied about you, and has slandered you to your sweetheart, you should set about righting yourself with the same discretion that you would exhibit in a matter of business. In the first place, corner him up, through the agency of some friend, and get down in black and white what he has really said, and then if it amounts to a slander prosecute him for it unless he will make a satisfactory retraction and an ample apology. Or, perhaps, after due reflection, you will come to the conclusion that he is not worth minding, in which case you will of course pursue the even tenor of your way, and leave him to digest the venom of his spleen at his leisure. Whatever you do don't let your temper get the better of you, for then you will be sure to come off worsted. And try, also, to understand that your love affairs are, after all, not of that immense consequence which you may on some occasions consider them, and that you and the rest of the world will be all the same a hundred years hence, however they go.

An Injured Daughter.—It was a most improper thing for your father to beat you so brutally, but were you altogether blameless? Children—even when they are girls of sixteen—should be instant in obedience to their parents, and on all occasions treat them with due respect and deference. We heartily sympathize with your sufferings, but we cannot approve of your mode of intended retaliation upon your father. The best way to retaliate would be to see how good a daughter you can hereafter be.

Marianne.—It is not customary for a person to marry, even if the wedding day be previously fixed upon, in less than six months after the death of a father, mother, brother or sister. This probationary period of love and respect for the memory of the deceased is sometimes disregarded, but all the surviving relatives and friends are certain to look upon such conduct with disapprobation, and it often leads to disastrous enmities. It is better always to respect the leading usages of society.

Youthful Inquirer.—We have no bound numbers or volumes of the Ledger, nor can we supply any. We do not wish to exercise any control over boys who sell the Ledger on railroad cars. They have a right to transact their own business in their own way, and if their greediness for pence leads them to "bite off their own noses," our face will not be disfigured—nor yours either As for the Ledger, *the people will buy it anyhow; and if they cannot get it satisfactorily at one place, they will seek it at another.*

Sophonisba wishes to know, in case a young gentleman accompanies her home several times from lectures and evening meetings, whether she ought to invite him to call on her? She should either invite him to call, or else stop his going home with her. By permitting him to accompany her home time after time she naturally leads him to believe that she has a preference for his society, and excites hopes in his breast which, if not realized, may occasion him very great pain.

Ambition.—There is nothing dishonorable in the "soldier's life;" on the contrary, when followed from right motives, it is highly honorable. In these "piping times of peace," however, the highest position in the army does not afford sufficient scope to a great and energetic nature, while the life of a common soldier is not very desirable. We make no charge for answering questions in this department of the Ledger

Commission Clerk, Albany County.—Your course would be regarded with disapprobation by every merchant to whose knowledge it should come By remaining silent while your employer was constantly defrauding his consignors, you made yourself morally a party to his swindling; and if you now "tell tales out of school," simply to retaliate for a personal affront, no mercantile house will be apt hereafter to permit you to enter their counting-room.

A Foreigner, who is not yet familiar with our language, says he promised to marry a girl, and afterwards wedded another, whereat the first sued him "for what she call one breesh of promise," and he wants to know if such things are allowed in this "land of liberty?" Yea, verily, they are. A man is bound to keep his promise here, or pay the penalty of breaking it.

Patriot.—We can not agree with you that Washington's military genius was equal to that of Napoleon. In fact, Napoleon is confessedly the greatest soldier the world has thus far produced. But Washington was an honester, a sounder and a *safer* man than Napoleon, and so was Wellington; hence, either Washington or Wellington was a better and wiser *ruler* than Napoleon.

Karmel.—We do not like to refer so often to our success, but for your gratification we will say that the course of the Ledger is still onward. Our circulation, which is already prodigious, is rapidly increasing, although this is a season of the year *when the circulation of newspapers generally is either on the stand still or decrease.* But with the Ledger there is no such thing as standing still.

Cleomen.—A member of a deliberative assembly cannot rise to a question of privilege while another is actually speaking. A privileged question simply takes precedence of all other *questions*. A person speaking can be legitimately interrupted by another who rises to a question of order, and the speaker must take his seat until the point of order is decided.

P. B.—Since you have asked us the question so plumply, we will as frankly answer that, in our opinion, the Ledger is the best literary and family paper in America; at least, the public think so, if we may judge by our extraordinary circulation.

J. A. G.—You will find in the Ledger of March 16th a full statement, by the Hon. Jefferson Davis, late Secretary of War, of the qualifications necessary for a candidate to a cadetship at West Point, and the regulations which govern appointments to the Military Academy at that place.

A Broadway Clerk—Your guardians have no right to interfere with the salary which you may receive from your employers. Such salary, being the reward of your own personal services, belongs exclusively to yourself, and is entirely at your own disposal.

A Persecuted Young Lady.—You would be doing wrong to marry a man whom you dislike, simply because he is "immensely rich" and your parents wish to *sell* you to him under the disguise of marriage.

C. S. K.—You can study any arithmetic without a teacher. They are all so simplified and systemized now-a-days, that every arithmetic is itself a teacher.

A. M. J.—We consider card-playing a waste of time. We do not care to act as an interpreter of and commentator upon Hoyle.

A Perplexed Mother is much troubled because she cannot get her husband to "take any notice of their babe—a sweet little cherub some seven months old." She says she never fails to call her husband's attention, when he comes home, to the rapid growth, the unusual beauty, and the superior intelligence of their little son, but he always turns away with a wearied air, and says "Oh—don't bother me! He's all well enough; he's a very fine child and I'm proud of him, but don't bother me!" This "want of affection," causes the mother much anxiety and unhappiness, and she asks us what she shall do in order to make her husband sensible of the treasure he has in his little son? You should do nothing—that is, you should do nothing directly. No man likes to be called upon constantly, *to pay down* affection or admiration, especially not when he comes home wearied and care-worn from his business. Keep your babe dressed as prettily as possible and never say anything to your husband about it, and he will soon begin to notice the little cherub of his own accord. No man, worthy of the name, can resist the dimples, and plumptitudes, and prattle, and prettiness of a babe, especially when that babe is his own, *and gives him no trouble.* This last point is an important one. A man who would bear up unflinchingly under Herculean toils and tantalizing annoyances, or who would look bankruptcy unflinchingly in the face, will often be driven to despair by a half-hour's annoyance of a fretful child.

J. C. C.—Although it is difficult, as a general thing, to impart much information in a short time to ignorant adults over thirty years old, we have not the remotest doubt that a person between thirty and forty, the ages mentioned in our correspondent's letter, can be instructed in the common branches of education. Of course the mind at such a mature period of life, is not susceptible of receiving impressions as it is at the dawn of intellect; but, at the same time, the stamp of education may leave a more durable mark after it has been applied with the *requisite force.* The fact, that the individual particularly referred to, is of an "imaginative turn of mind," and "tinged with superstition" will not, in our opinion, operate as a bar to her against her reaching to the gates of knowledge: if once she beholds the portals, and sees through the crystal bars the shining stores within, her "fiery, turbulent," inquiring spirit will force the gate, and enable her to grasp the treasure. In the case of a stolid, phlegmatic person it would be a hopeless task to attempt instruction at such a period of life; but with one of quick perception the labor of instruction would be comparatively light, because the pupil would consider learning a "labor of love." What the "easiest and quickest method" for teaching in such a case may be, is not easy to be determined. J. C. C. must be ruled by circumstances with which we cannot of course be acquainted: he had better apply to the teacher of an adult school, who will doubtless furnish him with the desired information.

A Troubled Damsel offers the following problem for solution, namely: A young lady is devotedly attached to a worthy young man, with whom her parents find no fault, and who wants her for a wife. But he is going to California to settle for life, and of course his wife will have to go with him. For this reason the girl's parent's object to her marrying him, and wish her instead to marry another young man who is going to stay in the neighborhood of the old folks, but whom the daughter does not love The question is, which shall the girl (who is greatly distressed by the necessity of either giving up her best beloved or of running counter to the wishes of her parents) marry—the man she loves or the man she does not love? We have often said, and we now repeat it, that a girl should never marry a man she does not love. That settles, so far as we are concerned, the case of the gentleman who is not loved; he should be put out of the question altogether. Then as to marrying your "true lover"—*that* is a matter for mutual consideration with you, him and your parents. Perhaps it would be a good plan to wait a little while. It is better never to be in haste to take an irrevocable step. You, of course, are the one to make the final decision, because it is your whole earthly happiness which is at stake; and if, taking everything into account, you think it would be better for you to marry him and go to California, you had better do so.

Pharoah wishes to know what a gentleman is; also, if any real good-hearted man who tries to do right is not a gentleman? He may be a gentleman in his aspirations but not in his performances. Strictly speaking, the word gentleman has as definite and rigorous a meaning as doctor, lawyer, swordsman, sailor, or any other descriptive noun. A true gentleman is one who has acquired the most complete control over all his faculties, and who always uses them in the most beneficent manner. This of course involves a thorough education, the utmost refinement of manner and goodness of heart, superlative tact, and unwavering self-possession. There have been but few "perfect gentlemen" in the world, as there have been but few pre-eminent soldiers, lawyers, doctors, etc. In fact, to be a "perfect gentleman," is to be the utmost of human achievement. Many people are in the habit of saying "So and so is a perfect gentleman;" but such expressions are to be classed with the "I was frightened to death," &c., of children and impulsive women. It has become customary, however, and is therefore proper, to speak of all people as ladies and gentlemen.

A Father, Brooklyn.—There is but little hope of your being able to reclaim a son who at the early age of nineteen has plunged into all the vices of the city, and become a confirmed debauchee. Such things are terrible trials to parents, but, with other ills, they sometimes have to be endured. Could you get your son into the Navy and have him sent off on a long cruise, or ship him on board a whaler bound for the Northern seas, it is barely possible that his vicious habits would be broken up, or his appetites so purified as to enable you to govern them on his return. The probability of such a result is slight however, for deep-seated passions, unless their be a strong undercurrent of natural morality, can seldom be eradicated by non indulgence. You would perhaps do well to travel with your son, as you say you have abundant wealth, and by mingling with him in innocent pleasures, and ennobling recreations, try to render such so much more attractive than his base indulgences that he will gladly abandon the latter for the former.

Uncle Sam.—It is no use for you or anybody else to fret and scold at the United States mails. They will pay no attention to your grumbling or your threats. They are above all law, and can therefore blunder and boggle their own business, and the affairs of those who seek to use them, in the most lawless manner. And after all, the officers of the Post Office Department probably do the best they can. A much smaller business, even when superintended by the proprietor in person, will often go wrong, and is it any wonder, then, that such a vast business as that of the United States Post Office Department, scattered over thousands of miles, and subjected to every possible accident which storms, floods, decaying bridges, railroad collisions, steamboat explosions, and blundering and dishonest agents can occasion, should have many shortcomings?

Peleg.—It is impossible to give you any advice which will enable you to "know how to act when in ladies' society." The embarrassment you mention can only be overcome by time and usage. Go in ladies' society as much as you can, and you will soon overcome it. It is proper to shake hands or not to shake hands when introduced to a lady; but you should let her determine that point. If she offers her hand take it, but don't offer your own.

T. A. H.—We should not advise an educated young man of good family to marry an ignorant servant girl; nor would we advise an ignorant servant girl to marry an educated young man of good family. Marriages between parties belonging to widely separated classes of society, are always followed by discontent and unhappiness.

Seargent Jasper.—You are too young to marry now; but when you become old enough, say a couple of years hence, you should pay no attention to the wishes or threats of the young lady's inebriate father. A drunkard has no moral right to interfere with his wife's and daughter's wishes in regard to such a matter.

Frankina K—Two dollars will pay for the Ledger for one year; the postage you will pay at the post-office whence you receive it. There are several parties who claim to be the inventors of the "Sewing-machine," but we do not know to whom belongs the honor

K. P.—Your only way is to pluck up courage and speak "right out" to the girl. You will encounter no danger in doing so. Girls like to be talked plainly to, when the subject is love and they are the object of it.

School-girls.—Among well known and intimate friends it is not improper for a lady to ask a gentleman to take her to a place of amusement; but unless one is *certain* that she will not be misunderstood, she should never do such a thing.

Waterloo.—A young man who keeps his hat on while making calls on the ladies, should have his hat politely removed by some fair hand, as often as he repeats the offence.

D. W. C. J.—It is utterly useless for parties to send us "little poems thrown off in a hurry." We always throw them into our basket in a still greater hurry.

Mary.—We think it is quite proper for a lady to work in her garden as much as she pleases, and to use therein the shovel and the hoe to whatever extent may be required.

Amator.—We never publish poetry, or anything else for pay. We would not publish the "poem" you send us, for ten dollars a line.

G. W. S.—You will have to subscribe for the Ledger and have it sent to you by mail, in order to get it after you go to Utah.

Ebenezer.—We have no agents to get subscribers to the Ledger, and we now know of nothing which would induce us to employ any.

Jenkinson. No. Our only terms of subscription are those which are published in the Ledger.

Orion.—You can get the back numbers of the Ledger from June 7th, 1856, at four cents a copy.

Julietta.—Marry the old gentleman if you love him.

_ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*